

SEBRING '58-TWELVE TOUGH HOURS

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SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED

35¢ june 1958

PROFESSIONALISM:
YES OR NO?

John Fitch vs M.J. Wyllie

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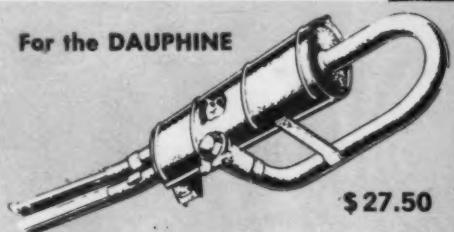
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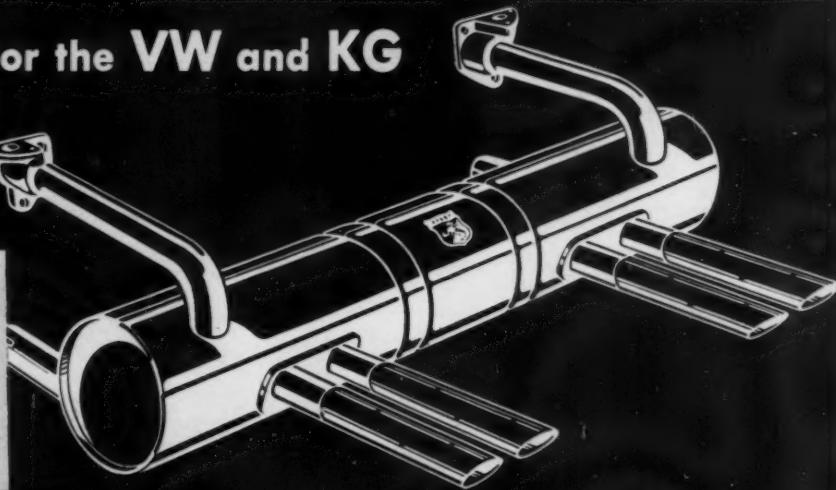
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SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED

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June 1958
no. 12 vol. 3



Here's that rainy Pomona again, this time with a Siata 208S Spyder, not too often seen these days. Kodachrome by Bob Coogan.

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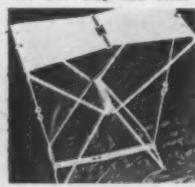
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MARION'S MEANDERINGS

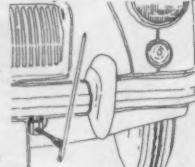
By MARION WEBER

Hi, there! I'll bet you are all primed to enjoy another season of sports car racing and other outdoor events. We are, and the one complaint we have had whenever attending such affairs is that you either have to stand all the time or lug a bulky camp stool along. This is ridiculous, we said, and sure enough somebody else thought so too but they did something about it and invented the **RUM普 ROOST**. This is a crazy little all-metal stool, 14" high with a 12½" x 6½" seat which holds up to 200 lbs. weighs 8 oz. and folds flat (less than an inch thick). Everybody should keep a couple of these in the car all times (you never know when you'll get tired!). \$1.95



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very sincerely yours:

ONE OF THE HOTTEST subjects on the sports car scene, or at least the competition division thereof, is whether or not sports car racing should "go for dough."

Starting on page 15, two extremely well qualified gentlemen present both sides of the question. M. R. J. "Doc" Wylie is convinced, apparently irrevocably, that sports car racing should be left strictly to amateurs and that such crass considerations as money should not enter into it. John Fitch on the other hand feels that if the money angle is forgotten much longer there won't be any need to consider it at all simply because there won't be any place to race.

We left the soap box entirely to the two principals in the argument—they have stated their individual sides of the case completely and adequately.

There is only one question that bothers us. What is all the noise about? Sure, it's a burning question and one that must be argued in public since it is so hot. But why in hell all the heat?

Actually most of the flames come from the side of the amateur. The SCCA in august grandeur amended its rules to delete the phrase "in the United States" from Rule 5 which defines the word *amateur*. Heretofore the rule had allowed people to race outside the limits of the U.S. for money and still retain amateur status as far as the SCCA was concerned. This from where we sat, always seemed to be pussy-footting things. Yet in one way it made sense—in Europe there is no hard and fast distinction. A professional is a man who makes his living or a large part thereof as a race driver—all others are amateurs. If you want to race outside the U.S. you're going to be in a money race no matter how pure your ideals. The new ruling by the SCCA means that if an American gets a bid for Le Mans, the Mille Miglia or even the Tottering-on-the-Brink Trophy he is liable to be barred from SCCA races for a year.

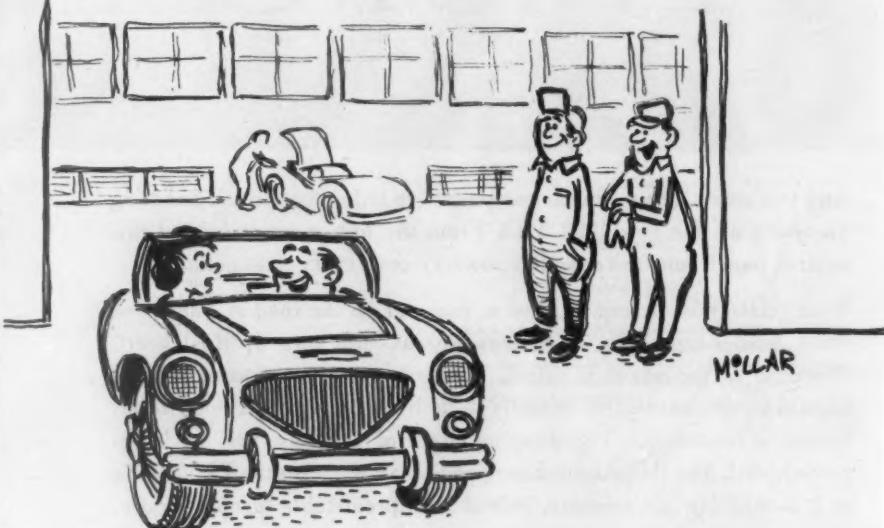
This little ruling is sure to have far-reaching effects unless the powers that be can see fit to go along with every other sport that makes a distinction between professional and amateur and come up with open events, allowing those who enter free choice between accepting money and going for kicks and cups alone. There are too many people who want to run one or more foreign events at which expenses are paid. If these people are dropped from the racing roster they're not just going to quit running. They're far more likely to form their own club or affiliate with one that does not have quite such a stringent attitude. When this happens the SCCA is likely to be dealt down to racing in their own driveway. While it's quite true the total membership of the national body is not made up of competition license holders it's equally true that one of the perquisites of membership is that of qualifying as a competition driver. Further, many who don't race serve at races in other capacities. In brief, racing is major activity of the national club and were it to cease, the club would be seriously weakened.

If, however, the SCCA keeps its definition of the term *amateur*, making it stick, and at the same time makes its National events (not regionals) "open", i.e. combination pro-am races it can do nothing but strengthen the club and at the same time become a proving ground for more American international drivers of the likes of Phil Hill, Masten Gregory et al.

Seems to us this last part alone would make it worth putting out all the fire.

—john christy

OH YEA!



"... SO I WALKS UP TO THE GUY AND TELLS 'EM THE TROUBLE IS IN THE CARBURETOR AND THAT HE'D BETTER REPLACE IT. I WOULD'A FIXED IT RIGHT UP BUT THE GUY PROBABLY NEEDS THE MONEY."

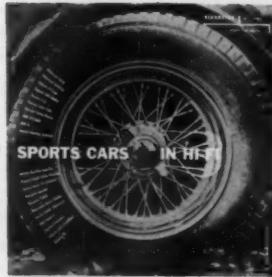
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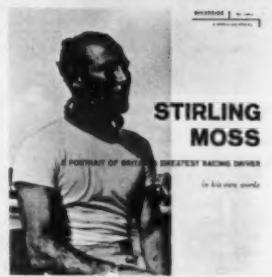
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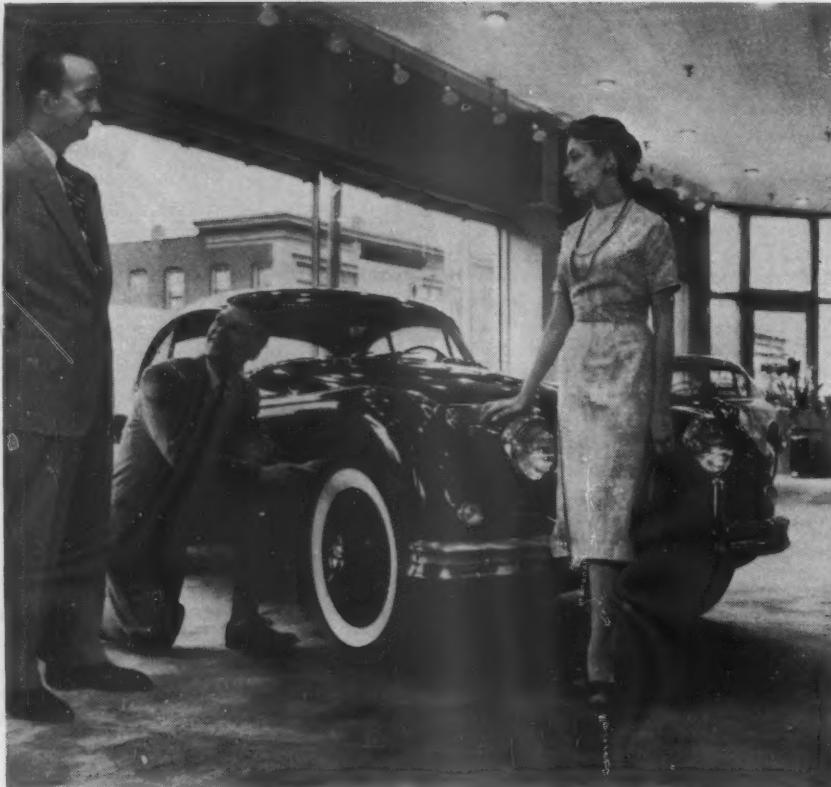
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letters

TO EACH HIS OWN

I enjoyed very much the letter published in the April issue, written by the four lads on the enthusiasm shown by so many for the topless, radioless, heaterless, and mufflerless, true hairy sport car with character. We once had a fellow in our club who was the absolute envy as he roared through all events in a 1938 BMW, I believe it was. This is all well and good for the Sport who lives in a quiet suburb by a beautiful lake, and is only a mile and a half to the downtown auto club, where he enters in a thirteen block rally to the nearest pub.

Some of us in this part of the country pack up the family and drive a 350 mile round trip to the nearest sport car club, where a hundred mile rally every couple of weeks or so is common occurrence. And on a 750 mile Saturday night tour through a winter snow storm to see the races on a frozen lake in Minnesota, a top and warm heater, and even a quiet muffler helps the enthusiast hold his enthusiasm a little longer. A noisy machine full of character is fine, but what good is that soul if you can't hear it for the exhaust? . . .

David Gould
Gillette, Wyoming

. . . There are real, honest-to-goodness, dyed-in-the-wool enthusiasts in our part of the country. What these indifferent boys are used to seeing is a city fellow who takes an hour on Sunday afternoon to polish up the chrome on the front of his 'bird and then drives over to see what the local chapter of his Driving and Chowder Society is doing. The crack about owning a Sports Car merely because the fellow down the street has one was not at all called for and shows the bad taste of the four boys in question. We live and breathe our cars as much, if not more, than the next guy. Just because some fellow decided to put a radio and heater in his '48 TC and started the whole concept of the, if I might be allowed to quote the words, "soft plushy and characterless Sports Cars of today," is no reason to turn up your noses at this new breed. A guy who wants to turn his TC into something akin to the Presidential Cadillac, complete with bar, has his reasons, so let's leave him alone, shall we?

Miss Carol Brooke Gussman
Newtown, Pa.

A bar in a TC? Goodbye cruel world BANG! — Ed.

THANKS

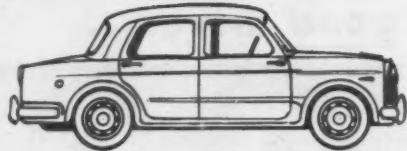
Several months ago I wrote a letter to you asking for help in rigging a manual clutch. So far I have received over one hundred-and-fifty letters, and they are still coming in. I have received letters from as far away as France and the Union of South Africa.

I am very grateful for all the help I have received. I wish to express my thanks to all who have written me. I will try to answer all the letters.

John Schenk
Cleveland, Ohio

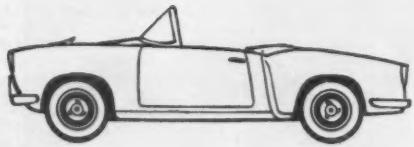
JUNE '58

SPORTS CARS ILLUSTRATED



FIAT'S

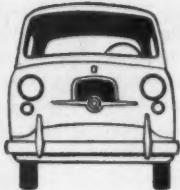
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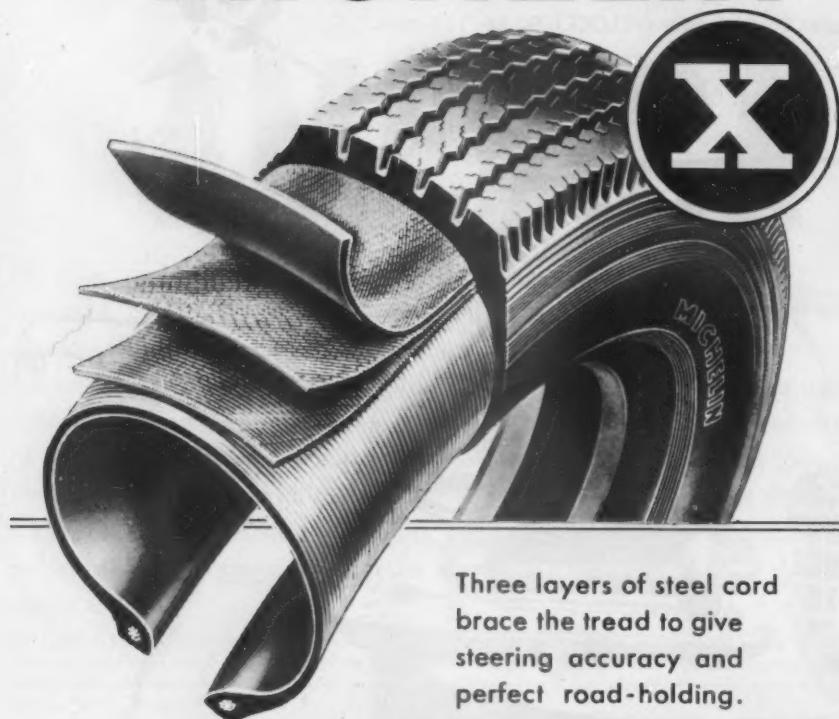
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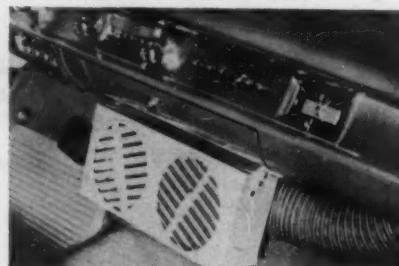
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COOLER!

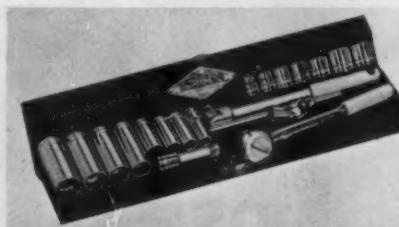
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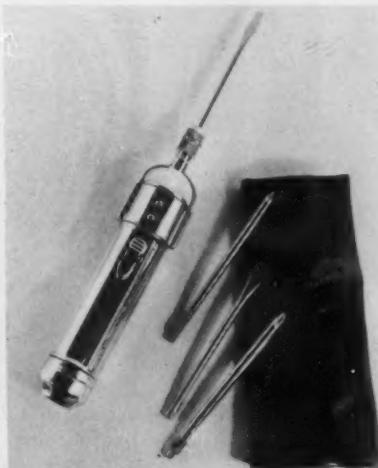
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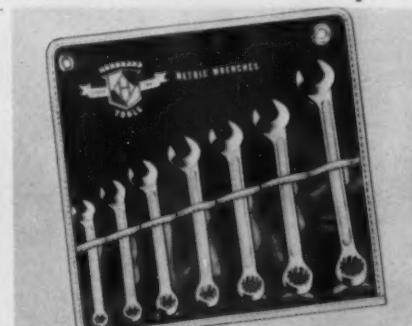
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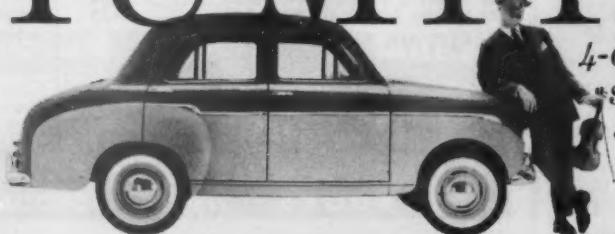
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Must the SCCA accept

PROFESSIONAL

SPORTS CAR RACES?

John Fitch says

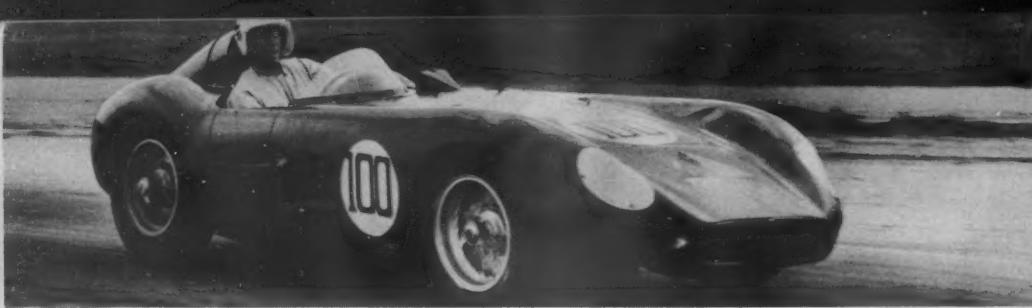
YES



Photos by Irv Dolin



NO
says M. R. J. Wyllie



John C. Fitch, the 40 year old Technical Director of Lime Rock Park, has probably raced more fascinating sports cars than any other American. His first race was at Bridgehampton in his own MG TC in 1949. Since then he has driven for Daimler-Benz, Cunningham, and Chevrolet, not to mention many others.

THE IDEA OF PROFESSIONAL road racing is not to make any one rich — if anyone thinks so, he will be sorely disappointed. It is not to eliminate or restrict amateur racing but to stimulate road racing and to insure its healthy growth for the benefit of everyone interested in it, spectators and participants alike.

What's wrong with it now — why change anything? If we are to have at our new private circuits the expensive pits, garages, and restaurants to conduct a sport to the satisfaction of a sizable section of the American public, there must be a means of paying for them. Until there is, we will do without and it is doubtful that any more circuits will be built (at a base cost of around \$200,000). It is also quite possible that we will lose some we now have to bankruptcy, if not to Levittowns. Why is this suddenly a factor? Why not let the public watch baseball and be damned? Because American road racing has arrived at the stage of financial responsibility; it is obliged to support our new courses to which it is firmly committed. This is a boring, unsporting sort of thing to have to face but it remains a fact of economics we must live with. The sooner we do, the better our race courses and our races will be. However, it is no terrible burden that will poison a burgeoning new sport anymore than a ski lift or a swimming pool does. It is apparent that we must have roads on which to race and that for convenience and safety they are best when expressly constructed as racing circuits on private grounds.

We have passed, thankfully, the stage of dangerous public roads and are passing the interim airport courses, which may serve some areas for a time to come despite the expense and inefficiency of temporary communications, crowd control and other facilities. Firmly embarked now on private courses, American road racing will stand or fall on them.

Our new circuits are potentially first rate but we are not reducing the debt for them at a workable rate, much less justifying continued investment for facilities we lack, or which are at best rudimentary.

The reason we are not drawing the broad public which pays our way is that our races are frankly dull — usually strung-out no-contests headed by an unapproachable leader running miles out in front. Happily there are exceptions and they are great, but all too rare. Financial responsibility means we can no longer exist on the usual desultory field seldom starting more than 3 potential winners. Those two or three are first rate, but racing being what it is, mechanical



"We must not, if

M. R. J. Wyllie, 38, has driven in SCCA events since 1952. Always active in this club (he helped found the Steel Cities Region and has been on the National Contest Board since 1956), he has raced his own cars with success. They have ranged from Jaguar XKs to Lotus XIs. His wife races, too.

THE CURRENT PROPAGANDA in favour of professional sports car racing is a curious manifestation of the shortsighted selfishness that characterises a minority of sports car drivers. In order to ensure the maintenance of a standard of living to which they have become accustomed but which they cannot support unaided, this minority is prepared to sacrifice the well-being of the great majority of SCCA members. Harsh words you say, trenchant and unjustified criticism you believe? Alas no! Regrettably it is but the unvarnished truth. The present campaign is a move by a small number of drivers who, unfortunately, appear to have become just a trifle too big for their coveralls.

To keep the record straight I would like to say categorically that I have no quarrel whatsoever with those who merely maintain that starting money or prize money or both should be paid to sports car drivers in the U.S.A. This is a free country and I would be the last to dispute the attitude that any friend of mine adopts towards professionalism. My sole objection is to the view that the Sports Car Club of America should sacrifice its principles to suit the convenience of the few. In other words that the SCCA should abrogate Rule 5 in Section II of its 1958 Competition Regulations. This rule states:

"Drivers shall receive no valuable remuneration for participating in events except the usual cups and trophies, and must at all times maintain their status as bona fide amateurs. More specifically, no amateur driver shall:

(1) Accept money for participation in or placing in any race or other automotive event.

(2) Accept wages or other compensation for driving another person's car or make his living directly or indirectly as a racing or competition driver.

(3) Accept from any sponsoring body, car owner, or any other source transportation of car (if car is driver-owned) or person, food, lodging, or other expenses involved in his participation in races or other automotive events. The latter proviso shall not be held to rule out the acceptance of bona fide hospitality of friends actually resident near race courses or freedom to exchange normal restaurant courtesies." (There is no objection to a person driving another's car provided that the driver pays his own way to the race.)

Also relevant, as we shall see, is Rule 6 of the same section. This states:

"A professional driver may be reclassified by the (Contest) Board after waiting a period of one year from his last

if the club driver isn't to lose his ball field," says John Fitch

trouble will normally claim one and the *usual* result is that someone runs away and hides. That the aficionados are satisfied by such a procession, if they are, is beside the point because there are not enough of them to approach the broad public support we require. The clear solution is a strong field of *many* potential winners. We need 20 Hills and Shelbys and Hansgens. True, drivers of this caliber are hard to come by but right now there are half a dozen promising ones who could make it interesting, and with a few races behind them they'd be even better. All they need is cars.

Where will they come from? Professionalism would bring in many new cars whose potential owners cannot now afford the crushing burden of an activity classified by the tax revenuers as a "hobby".

Winnings will be insufficient for some time to directly support the racing equipes but with the hobble of amateurism lifted there would be several means of easing the cost squeeze.

Industry in the form of oil, tire and accessory manufacturers would contribute as they do in Europe and in U.S. track racing. Winnings, even if initially small until the circuits get on their feet, would help. Businesses would be able to "advertise" through racing as several car agencies now do. With this help and together with the important tax relief, many would-be entrants could then justify the expense of their chosen sport. They need only an excuse because the sorry fact is, amateur or pro, racing is good sport and poor business.

At best racing makes money for very few people. Even the Indianapolis jack-pot has been good business for no one, practically speaking, because a win on that millionaire's roulette wheel inevitably brings the big time players back to try again, with the usual results. (In fact, the outfit that wins Indianapolis will normally have already made several attempts with \$30,000 cars and \$50,000 budgets and cannot possibly win enough to balance its books.)

On the present U.S. road racing scene, there are two interests to be served. One is the "club" driver, a weekend participant-sportsman who is most often found in the production classes. He rarely aspires to the World's Championship ship but he loves to race. He doesn't care about crowds or finances — he merely wants the opportunity to race when he chooses on convenient, safe circuits. And he usually has a family and a mortgage.

The other, representing the need for proper circuits, can best be illustrated by an equation:

Dull races = public apathy = poor attendance = poor circuits.

Here our "club" driver is in danger of losing his ballfield. At the present stage, less convenience and safety than we now have will be hard to accept. We have been trying to say that professionalism will open road racing to many more strong entrants, potential winners with big names that the public wants to see. Given a field of strongly competitive cars we then have another equation:

Close, exciting races = broad public support = good attendance = good circuits.

With this equation our club driver has his opportunity to race secured. Present circuits would then be highly developed and additional circuits built in the many sections of the country that need them.

Picture a race program designed to satisfy both interests. First we would have the SCCA amateur events with the

(Continued on page 54)

if SCCA racing is to remain the envy of the world," says "Doc" Wyllie

professional driving appearance in the United States."

I might as well anticipate the reaction of a small number of readers to these rules. I can hear now their plaintive screams. "What about X -- he gets paid to drive by Maserati? What about Y -- he clears \$12,000 a year from Ferrari? How about Z and his connection with well-known German company? If the rules are being broken by these individuals why does the SCCA not take action against them? And if the rules are being broken with great profit by a few, why not be honest and permit all who are so desirous to get on the gravy-train?"

This is specious balderdash.

There is no vestige of proof that, at the present time, any SCCA member is deliberately violating Rule 5. The SCCA is, of course, an anachronistic organization. It is an organization conceived by gentlemen and dedicated to the proposition that its members are gentlemen. Furthermore, it has no power of subpoena; and of this it is proud. It believes that the vast majority of its 1800 competition drivers sincerely follow the precepts of Rule 5. It believes that they do this not because they fear the omniscience and omnipotence of the Contest Board but because they are sportsmen and gentlemen. This is a simple fact which is, admittedly, meaningless to some but, perhaps, of no little significance to many. To that minority, if it exists (and I emphasise the doubt), which chooses to break Rule 5 and thereby to cheat, this view of the majority may seem childish and naive. But the majority has one surpassing long-term advantage. Those who compose it can live happily with their consciences, they can regard their trophy shelves with tranquility and they can look their friends in the eye. Maybe these are crude and parochial gifts; nonetheless they possess a certain savour.

The Contest Board has had no hesitation in suspending SCCA members who have violated Rule 5 in circumstances which left no room for argument. Those who accepted money for participating at Sebring in 1957 will doubtlessly bear witness to this fact. Although I can only write unofficially it is well within the realm of probability that the Contest Board may, in 1958, strengthen Rule 5. If it does this it is not necessarily implying that Rule 5 is being broken by its members. Its aim will be to stop the gossip which so confidently asserts that Rule 5 is being ignored. In 1957 the Contest Board, for the first time, decreed that a number of production cars be arbitrarily impounded and inspected at the conclusion of races. Its inspection techniques were, admittedly, far from impeccable. Nevertheless it was a singular fact that not one car so inspected was found to be modified in a manner that would improve upon the specifications of its maker. Some columnists notwithstanding, a curious calm appears to have encompassed those who once asserted that only grossly modified production cars won production car races!

To summarise: There is no evidence to prove that, at the present time, Rule 5 of the SCCA is being broken with impunity. There is certainly gossip to this effect, and where there is smoke there may well be flame. The Contest Board is not uninformed. I believe that, when circumstances justify action by the Board, action will be taken. But, to date, the problem of professionalism has been minor. The present campaign to legalize professionalism within the ranks of the SCCA is not, in my view, a manifestation of its large-scale *sub rosa* existence. Rather it is the legitimate, if misguided, expression of the views of those who have conscientiously adhered to Rule 5 but who now feel that the rule is outmoded.

(Continued on page 55)

SEBRING

TWELVE TOUGH HOURS

IT COULD HAVE BEEN anybody's race, this 1958 Sebring Grand Prix of Endurance, at least on paper. Nobody, in the Sports category at least, had an edge in inches over anybody else. Nobody really had the edge in drivers either. Aston had Stirling Moss but Ferrari had Peter Collins and Phil Hill for their lead car, backed up by Mike Hawthorn and Luigi Musso with Bergh von Trips and Olivier Gendebien for support. Jaguar (in the guise of Ecurie Ecosse, a tough team in any league) had Ron Flockhart, Ninian Sanderson, Masten Gregory and Ivor Bueb. Cunningham with two Lister-Jaguars had the old Lister-meister Archie Scott-Brown with Pat O'Connor, Walt Hansgen and Ed Crawford.

The Porsche factory with the new RSK and a normal looking RS had pulled a sleeper by upping displacement to 1587 cc, bringing them just into Class E. The muscular little mites put out a reported 150 hp, DIN hp at that. When these cars, with Schell and Seidel in one and Behra and Barth in the other, began scooting around in times the likes of three-liter Ferraris during practice it looked like one more contestant for the big prize was in the lists.

Yes, it looked like anybody's race but it wasn't. It was Signor Ferrari's race by the end of five hours, hands down and no argument. It didn't really look that way at first but that was the way it was to be. The man from Modena had the cards stacked from the beginning. Counting in a brace of 250 Europa coupes, Ferrari had an even dozen cars running as against two DBR1-300's and one hastily-rebuilt not-too-healthy DB 2-4 Mk III coupe (it crashed in practice) for Aston Martin and two cars each for each of the other major-contender teams. Further, six of Mr. Ferrari's machines were the new 250 Testa Rossas, three of them direct from the factory and three privately entered. In a race that counts points for the manufacturer, not for the driver, Enzo Ferrari was sitting pretty.

When the countdown came the first man away was "Honest John" Kilborne in a '57 Corvette hardtop. John must have had the car in gear, the switch on and the throttle screwed to the firewall; he came out of the slot in a full, screaming drift and as he hit the center line, the Corvette bore off toward the first turn as though it was sporting a turpentined tail. This improbable but spectacular lead lasted about half way around the course when two things happened simultaneously. The first happenstance was Stirling Moss making up for an unusually (for Moss) bad start and the second was injector trouble which left Kilborne with the dubious distinction of being the only man in the race to be leader and anchor man on the same lap.

Moss, in first place already, started



THE TOP TEN

Car No.	Car	Liters	Laps	Score & Pos on Index	Drivers
14	Ferrari	3.0	200	1.360 5th	P. Hill, Santa Monica, Calif. P. Collins, England
16	Ferrari	3.0	199	1.353 7th	L. Musso, Italy O. Gendebien, Belgium
41	Porsche	1.6	193	1.408 2nd	H. Schell, Paris, France W. Seidel, Germany
56	Lotus	1.1	179	1.389 3rd	S. Weiss, Sacramento, Calif. D. Tallakson, Ft. Worth, Tex.
22	Ferrari	3.0	179	1st in GT	P. O'Shea, Port Chester, N. Y. B. Kessler, Beverly Hills, Calif.
55	Lotus	1.1	179	1.389 4th	D. Cunningham, Stamford, Conn. Colin Chapman, England Cliff Allison, England
21	Ferrari	3.0	175	2nd in GT	George Arents, Stamford, Conn. G. Reed, D. Odell
60	Osca	0.75	175	1.470 1st	A. and I. deTomaso, West Palm Beach, Florida
54	Lotus	1.1	175	1.356 6th	B. Ferguson, Columbus, Ohio J. Chamberlain, N. Hollywood, Calif.
43	Porsche	1.5	174	3rd in GT	B. Frost, England Baron H. von Hanstein, Germany H. Linge, Germany

churning out lap after lap in the neighborhood of three minutes, twenty-three seconds which was merely last year's track record (set in a Maserati carrying half again as many more inches). Hot on his heels, however was Mike Hawthorn who had been elected harrier for the Ferrari team. Stepping on Mike's heels in turn was Roy Salvadori in the second Aston. Salvadori was himself being pushed by Peter Collins in #14, the Ferrari team's #1 car. Just a bit back but threatening came Archie Scott-Brown in the Lister and slavering at Archie's tail feathers came two more 250 TR's, the third team car with Gendebien up, and Richie Ginther in Johnny Von Neumann's privately entered car.

In this last clutch were the makings of a first class incident since all were running under the proverbial blanket and Archie is occasionally given to various forms of racemanship in order to get rid of tailgating competition. Whether or not Archie gave way to such an impulse to get rid of Gendebien is not known but the incident was not long in coming — 10 minutes worth of race time to be exact. The Lister charged into the last turn in front of the timers' stand with the Ferrari inches behind. All was right with the pair until the moment came when the Lister should have started burning rubber out of the turn and down the straight. It didn't. In a fraction of a second Archie was sharing cockpit space with a very large Englebert tire which was quite firmly attached to Gendebien's Ferrari. The tire and concomitant wheel had made entry into Archie's private domain by cutting itself a trench up the Lister's deck, coming to rest gently but insistently on the little Englishman's right shoulder. Both drivers hopped out and surveyed the damage. Gendebien looked at the Englishman who in turn morosely stared at the mangled metal that had been a Lister. The Belgian shrugged his shoulders, got back in the Ferrari, slipped it into reverse, backed out of the mess and after a brief pit stop charged off toward what, 11 hours and forty-odd minutes later, was to be second place overall. Archie, showing his imprinted shirt in the pits later, said he had suddenly lost power at the crucial moment, a very significant statement indeed. Within the next three and a half hours every Jaguar-powered car in the race had suffered a similar malady — loss of power followed in some cases by expensive-sounding internal noises. More on this in a moment.

Others were also having troubles. Porsche Spyder #45, entered by Jean Pierre Kunstle and Ken Miles, had gotten off to a beautiful start, heading the 1500 Spyders and following on the heels of the factory machines. Miles ran the pit during the first period while "J.P." ran the machinery smoothly and efficiently. But the pair which had placed second last year on Index was not to have it so good. At about two hours Kunstle was seen to be stretching out in the cockpit, driving with one hand, with the other hand buried in the innards of the car through a side hatch. The throttle had broken clean off at the floorboard and Kunstle was forced to drive the length of the course with one hand operating the carburetor linkage.



Stirling Moss, co-winner in 1954, and Tony Brooks led easily for the first four hours, but a gearbox failure put them out of the picture.



Gendebien's Ferrari managed to climb up the back of Scott-Brown's Lister-Jaguar, putting Archie out after 4 laps.



Collins, Gendebien parade first, second place Ferraris through repaved esses into sunset. With victory assured, speed was way down.



Photos by Bull, Christy, Grier, Pelatowski, and Wilder



750 Osca took an easy first on Index.



Winner's T-R had RHD, de Dion axle.



von Neumann-Ginther went out fourth.

Lotus 1100s finished fourth, sixth, ninth.



Quick repairs were made and Kunstle took off again to finish up his three hour trick and then handed over to Ken. Miles's ride lasted all of 45 minutes and then the clutch locked up somewhere betwixt and between engage and disengage. Finis.

The Elvas, after a fierce preview showing earlier at Nassau were also having problems. One had gone down during night practice when some boob turned his headlights down the course along the Warehouse straight. "Doc" Wyllie got these full in the face. Blinded, he lost control and bent the car irretrievably around a pole. Wyllie wasn't damaged but the car was a crowbar case. Another lost brakes and clutch. A third driven by Frank Baptista, came storming into the hairpin, had the front brakes lock up. The car slid into the LeMans-like sandbank sideways. Getting underway again, Baptista made another lap only to have the same thing happen again. Instead of burrowing in, the Elva sailed over and disappeared entirely. When the marshals looked over the bank, no wreckage did they find. Instead a furious Frank was busily churning up a dirt road parallel to the course looking for a hole to get back through. He found it. Next time around he negotiated the 135-degree right hairpin by turning left 225 degrees. Having tried the bend right,

Faced with a cutback of something like 30 cubic inches the Jaguar people were forced to find some way to make up for the lost torque those inches had provided. The answer was thought to be in higher engine speeds and to achieve this they went to more radical cam profiles and valve spring pressures of around 280 pounds. The time allowed for testing hadn't showed up the fact that the radical cam grinds and brutal pressures used were just plain non-compatible. Something had to go and something did. In the case of the Ecosse cars it was simply springs and stretched valves. The Cunningham machinery fared worse with cracked blocks and blown pistons which can of course happen from a multitude of sins both of omission and commission. In this case, though the causes were not the usual ones but were probably traceable to valve faults. With the D-types and the Listers out, the race boiled down to the fact that Aston Martin had two cars running and Ferrari had that full dozen, ten of which could be considered expendable. One 250 TR and one coupe had to finish.

The not-too-healthy DB Mk III was out of contention almost as soon as it started with left rear hub problems. There was a yeoman effort made to save this one; it was in the pits from the end of the



Headlights, tires are replaced before Seidel takes over third place Porsche. Von Hanstein, Schell watch at far left.

straight ahead and left, all to no avail, he continued on with a bit less exuberance only to retire later with a set of broken rings and a cockpitful of Steen C fumes. Of the remaining two, one finished 28th and the other dead last.

Jaguars and Jaguar-powered cars were the ones which really had their share and then some of just plain trouble. First out was Scott-Brown's Lister, followed 17 minutes later by the second one, Ed Crawford up. The casualty list says "cracked block" but on the spot diagnosis was placed at the door of collapsed valve gear. The third Cunningham car, a D-type, came in at one hour plus four minutes, this one with a holed piston. Later by 36 minutes, the first of the Ecurie Ecosse Jaguars ended dead on the course with collapsed valve springs to be followed in less than two hours by the second Murray machine with the same malady.

What had happened was fairly simple.

first hour to the end of the fifth but the trouble was one not soluble with the material at hand.

Now it was a war of attrition, the question being a simple matter of whether or not the Astons could last the distance and at the same time hold off the gang of Ferraris howling at their heels. Part of the answer came when Carroll Shelby eased #25 into the pits at four hours and forty minutes. The linkage to the rear mounted gearbox had parted company with its universal joint, a fairly simple malady and a heart-breaking one since it was impossible to make the universal stick on the shaft — a case of a two-bit item putting the quietus to ten thousand dollars worth of still-potent racing equipment. Tony Brooks had taken over for Moss and had maintained the lead up to the start of the fifth hour. Bringing the car in he handed over to Moss in a three minute, forty second stop, losing the lead to the Hill-Collins Ferrari which had also pit-

ted but only for a minute and a half. Moss charged out to gain back his lead, cutting it down lap by lap from 52 seconds to 22 in seven laps. The pace proved too hot for the savagely lashed Aston, though, and Moss was through with a broken gearbox at five hours and 16 minutes.

Since the lone Maserati had gone out at three hours and 50 minutes, the big-bore contention was strictly a Ferrari party from that point on. From the 98th lap until the 156th it looked almost fixed with numbers 14, 15, 16 and 17, all 250 Testa Rossas, running in the first four places in just that order. On the 156th lap the Hawthorn-Von Trips car, #15, went into the pits for good with a broken half-shaft which sort of spoiled the order of things as seen by Signor Tavone. On they went, still in the same order but minus #15. By the end of the 10th hour, #17, now being driven by Johnny Von Neumann started showing signs of serious problems, i.e., a savagely growling rear end. To be blunt, it sounded downright unhealthy. What was worse, Johnny and Richie had gone all out to save brakes for a last ditch effort at the end of the race. Von Neumann nursed the car along, still holding third by a mere lap over the sole remaining 1600 RS Porsche until his 168th round when the ground-up pinion

tively compared to the Porsche's 193.

When the final laps were tallied, two real surprises showed up. Sitting right up there in fourth position like a happy ferret among a bunch of geese was Team Lotus #56, an 1100 no less. In eighth overall and first on Index of Performance was a tiny 750 cc Osca which had been steadily circling the course, turning in lap times of four minutes and less for the full 12 hours. That a Seven-Fifty could cut a lap at four minutes was unheard of, even on a record try—to do it steadily for 175 laps at five-plus miles a copy was unthinkable but there it was, driven by husband-wife team of Alejandro and Isabelle DeTomaso with an assist at night from Bob Ferguson.

Fifth overall and first in Grand Touring was the O'Shea-Kessler 250 Europa Ferrari coupe, on the same lap as the fourth place Lotus. The team prize, awarded for the highest aggregate number of laps by a complete official three-car team, was collected by Austin Healey, the team being bossed by Donald and Geoffrey Healey. Having the designer run your team for you is about as good as you can get.

Two months ago we said this was not a boys' event. Despite the fairly high proportion of simon pure amateurs and non-professionals finishing the '58 edition of Sebring's 12 tough hours, it's still a race



CBS had coverage by Walter Cronkite.

Ferrari coupes took first, second in GT.



"Bored-out" Porsche RS outlasted the new RSK (both of them were 1587 cc) to finish third with 193 laps.



There was prize money, too, this year.



Shortly before 10 pm, Tavone called in the leading Ferrari to replace Phil Hill with Peter Collins, letting the latter take the checkered flag honors.

finally gave up the struggle.

There had been some pre-race speculation concerning whether or not the fantastically rapid "1600" RS Porsche Spyders could pull a sleeper and walk home with the race. By this time it began to look as if they just might pull it off even though the new coil-sprung RSK driven by Behra and Barth had gone out with oil seal troubles. Spyder #41, outwardly normal but internally a meaty 1587 like the RSK, driven by Schell and Seidel was in a fairly strong third some eight laps behind the two team Ferraris. There was an audible "two down, two to go" muttering around the Porsche pits as the 11th hour drew to a close. Optimism is no substitute for cubic inches, however, even when the machinery bearing the edge in inches is out of brakes as were the two Ferraris. When the final bomb went off and the flag fell the two Ferraris had made a final driver change, picked up a quick charge of fuel and covered a total of 200 and 199 laps respec-

for men. Until luck and machinery ran out for Jaguar and Aston Martin the pace was altogether too rough for the part time *pilotos*. At least two crackups could be directly chalked up to a maximum of misplaced enthusiasm coupled with a minimum of ability and physical capability. The first three to four hours of the race were run almost as if it were a three-hour sprint and the pace was set by the best men in the business. Club drivers with a winter of soft living behind them had no business, regardless of the potency of their equipment, trying to stay with these men of the sport of men who had spent that same winter conditioning for what promises to be one of the toughest international seasons to date.

Ending on the same note as we started a year ago, Sebring is the toughest test in the world on brakes and gears. As of now, it's also no daisy-dance for the drivers; for them it's the toughest twelve hours they can spend behind the wheel.

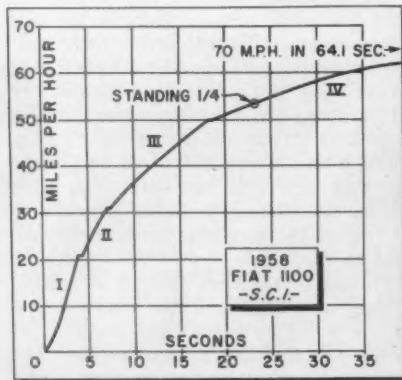
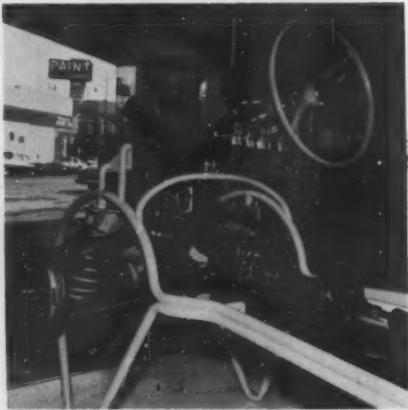
-JC & SW



**SCI
ROAD TEST:**

WE TOOK DELIVERY of new 1958 FIAT 1100 in one of the heaviest rainstorms of the southwest winter, creating test conditions which are rare in that arid climate. The car had been standing for hours in the downpour but no water had leaked into passenger, engine or luggage compartments. Our route led us across the San Fernando valley, notorious for its intersection dips that flood whenever someone washes his car. At the first flooded dip we crawled through water that nearly reached the hubs, then gave the brake pedal an experimental jab to see to what extent the binders had been drowned. To our great surprise they were absolutely unaffected. So we set out to learn just how much dousing the brakes and engine would stand. After several 40 mph passes through ponds several inches deep and at least 100 feet wide we had had enough, but the Fiat had not. Neither engine nor brakes were affected in the least. As we left the valley the only evidence of all these rapid fordings was a few drops of water that had been forced through the clutch and brake pedal openings and landed on the thick rubber floor mat. We observed that while the windshield wipers have a fixed

Big springs for a light car add up to firm, stable ride. Note steering linkage above transmission.

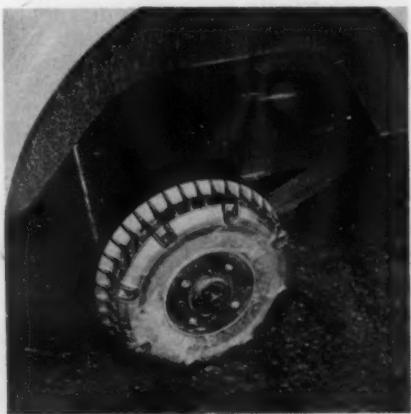


operating speed; it was fully adequate to the deluge.

Then we entered the mountains, on the way to our desert test area. The rain still was heavy and we used the drenched, winding roads to test the Fiat's skid-proneness. We know this course intimately, know the speeds at which we like to take its curves. We were definitely impressed by the way the Fiat stayed glued just as though the pavement were dry. Some credit for this wet-road stability belongs to the 1100's Pirelli tires, with their somewhat soft tread compound, but most of it is due Fiat's chassis engineers.

The ride and handling qualities of the 1100 or Millecento (pronounced mee-leh-chen-to) are all that you would expect of a car designed to give satisfaction to the hard-driving motorists of a country that is largely mountainous. Test the shock absorbers by the common method of bearing down on a fender with both hands and you find that the 1100 is shocked like a race car; there's scarcely any give. Then you have a look at the suspension and find that the springs are extremely beefy for so light a car and are further beefed by large diameter anti-roll bars front and rear. The resulting ride, we feel, is delightful. It is firm

Wide, light alloy drums cover a total of 149 square inches of brake lining. Fade in brake test was imperceptible.





Rear end breaks away very gradually into an outward swing as 1100 takes bend at high speed. There's little body roll, no tire squeal even when it's pushed hard.

but never harsh. It is very smooth on smooth roads and its ride over surfaces that would be sheer misery in most Detroit cars is still smooth and pleasant. The possibility of the Fiat's suspension bottoming is quite remote and high average speeds can be maintained comfortably and safely over roads where many other cars are forced to crawl. Rear axle windup due to braking and acceleration seems to be nil, but there is some noise from the suspension at work.

The 1100's worm and roller steering is precise, feather-light, devoid of feedback, and quick. It has the feel of two turns from lock to lock instead of the three it actually has. A driver not used to such sudden steering should put himself through a cautious break-in period while getting used to any one of the many cars possessing this nimble characteristic. The difference is that a movement of a Detroit wheel that will produce no change in direction but merely take up the slop can drastically alter the course of a quick-steering car. Just for clarity, we reaffirm our preference for the latter.

The 1100's serene cornering behavior abets its staunch suspension in making possible average speeds that are higher than most people would expect of a car with a 75 mph straightaway potential. It wheels around curves like a roller skate, with very little body roll and almost no tire squeal even when pushed hard. When extended far beyond sensible public-road cornering speeds the rear end breaks away very gradually into an outward swing.

The Millecento's overall feel on the road is one of stability and well-knit, almost rock-like solidity and is an excel-

Anti-roll bars and beefy shocks give firm ride with excellent cornering stability. Fiat can maintain high speeds on roads where other cars would have to crawl.



FIAT 1100

Price \$1683
 Distributor Hoffman
 443 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. and
 9130 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills,
 Calif.

TOP SPEED:

Two-way average 74 mph
 Fastest one-way run 76 mph

ACCELERATION:

	seconds
From zero to 30 mph	6.6
40 mph	12.0
50 mph	18.0
60 mph	33.6
70 mph	64.1
Standing 1/4 mile	23.4
Speed at end of quarter	54 mph

SPEED RANGES IN GEARS:

	I	II	III	IV
	0 to 21 mph	10 to 31 mph	14 to 49 mph	16 to top

SPEEDOMETER CORRECTION:

Indicated	Actual
30	26
40	36
50	46
60	56
70	66

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Hard driving during speed tests 21.4 mpg
 Average driving (under 60 mph) 39.9 mpg (Startlingly higher figures possible).

BRAKING EFFICIENCY (10 successive emergency stops from 60 mph, just short of locking wheels):

	Per cent g
1st stop	67
2nd	67
3rd	65
4th	65
5th	65
6th	65-left rear grabs at low speeds
7th	63
8th	63
9th	63
10th	63

SPECIFICATIONS

POWER UNIT:

Type	In-line four
Valve Arrangement	Pushrod ohv
Bore & Stroke	2.68 x 2.95 in (68 x 75 mm)
Stroke/Bore Ratio	1.10 to one
Displacement	66.5 cu in (1089 cc)
Compression Ratio	7.0/1
Carburetion by	Single-throat downdraft Weber
Max. Power	43 bhp @ 4800 rpm
Max. Torque	54 ft-lbs @ 2700 rpm
Idle Speed	450 rpm
Valve timing	Intake opens 16° BTC Intake closes 65° ABC Exhaust opens 65° BBC Exhaust closes 16° ATC

DRIVE TRAIN:

Transmission ratios	I	II	III	IV
	3.86	2.38	1.57	1.00
Final drive ratio	4.3			
Axle torque taken by				Leaf springs and stabilizer bar

CHASSIS:

Wheelbase	92 in
Front Tread	48.3 in
Rear Tread	47.7 in
Suspension, front	Coil springs, wishbones, anti-roll bar
Suspension, rear	Semi-elliptic springs, anti-roll bar
Shock absorbers	Tubular hydraulic
Steering type	Worm and roller
Steering wheel turns L to L	3.3
Turning diameter	33 ft.
Brake lining area	149 sq in
Tire size	5.20 x 14

GENERAL:

Length	153.7 in
Width	57.3 in
Height	58.5 in
Weight, test car	1970 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R	53.1/46.9
Fuel capacity	10 U.S. gallons

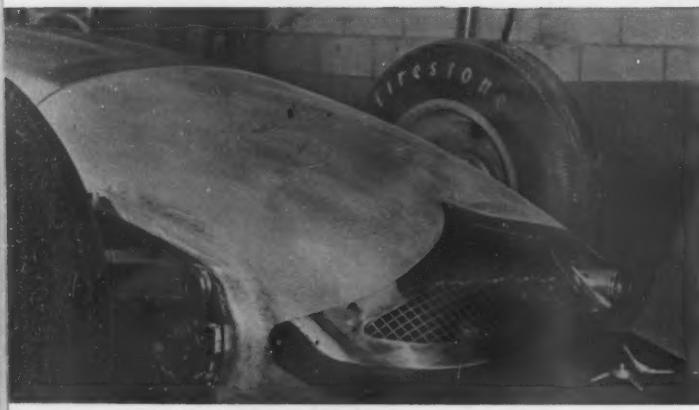
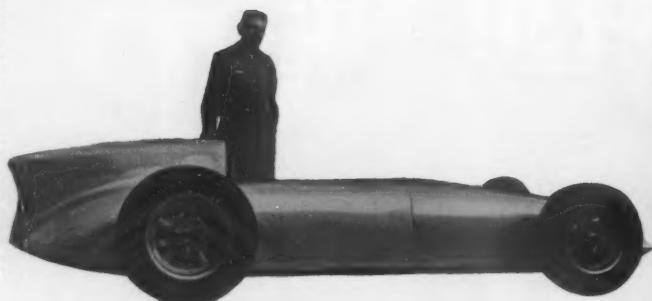
RATING FACTORS:

Bhp per cu. in.	0.65
Bhp per sq. in. piston area	1.91
Torque (lb-ft) per cu. in.	0.82
Pounds per bhp-test car	45.8
Piston speed @ 60 mph	1840 fpm
Piston speed @ max bhp	2360 fpm
Brake lining area per ton	151 sq in
Mph per 1000 rpm	16.1

(Continued on page 59)

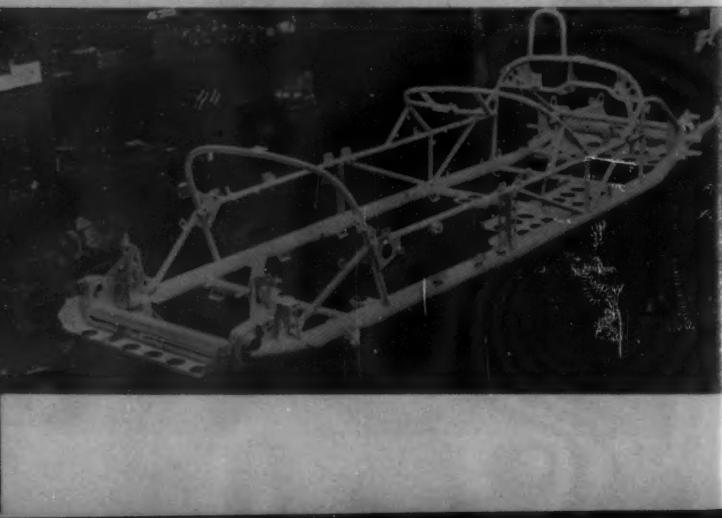
New cars . . . *Indy*

Photos by Lysle E. Evans

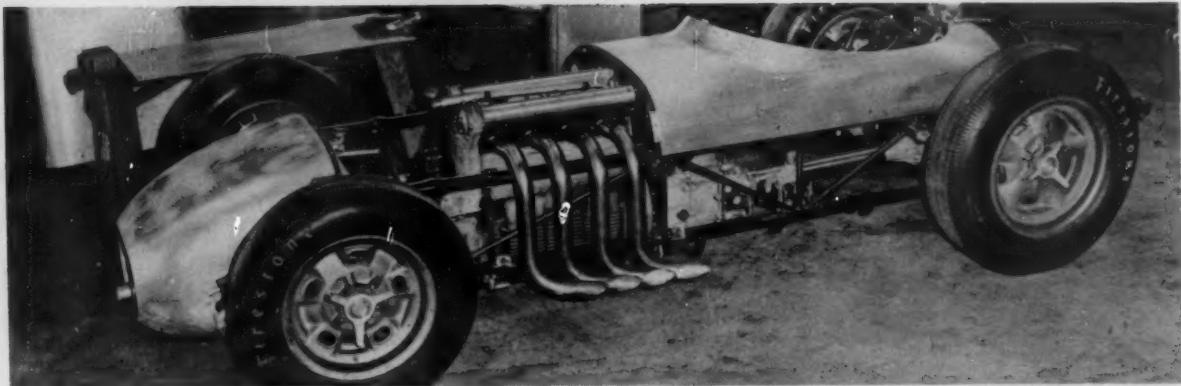


CONTRARY to popular belief in some sports car circles, the cars that race at Indy are not all identical, nor even the same year after year. By far the most novel change to be seen this May is independent front suspension on the newest Frank Kurtis product, the "D-A Lubricant Special." Nearly hidden behind the Buck Rogers "needle nose," *left*, is the upper trailing arm of welded sheet steel. It's geometrically similar to a Porsche or VW front end, but only the lower trailing arm connects to a torsion bar. The lower trailing arm, *above*, is the normal Kurtis roadster part, but the new one, still to be made, will be offset several inches outboard to attach to a vertical post on the stub axle. And that's not a machine gun for wiping out the opposition. It's a guide for the long shaft on the portable electric starting motor.

JEAN MARCENAC, *left*, is the chief wizard on the supercharged Novi V-8's. Here he shows Frank Brisko, an old-time Indy driver, how he is going to beef up the lengthy throttle linkage to prevent repetitions of the breakages which put the car out of action twice last year. With the blower at the front of the engine, linkage must run all the way forward from the cockpit, giving plenty of length to vibrate. During the complete strip-down and rebuild this spring, the five gallon oil tank was moved from the tail right up to the engine compartment. This meant a change in steering linkage, which will now run outside the body from the cockpit forward. The ever-impressive Novis, like the newest Kurtis cars, are based on a simple ladder frame, *below*. The rest of the tubing seen is for hanging-on the body. Everything goes on with Dzus fasteners for instant removal and ease of access.

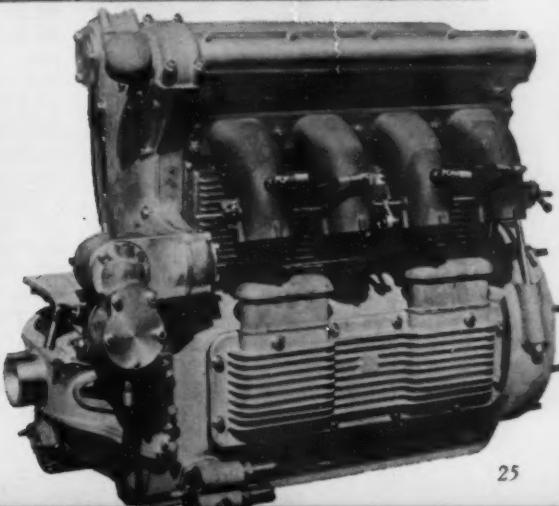
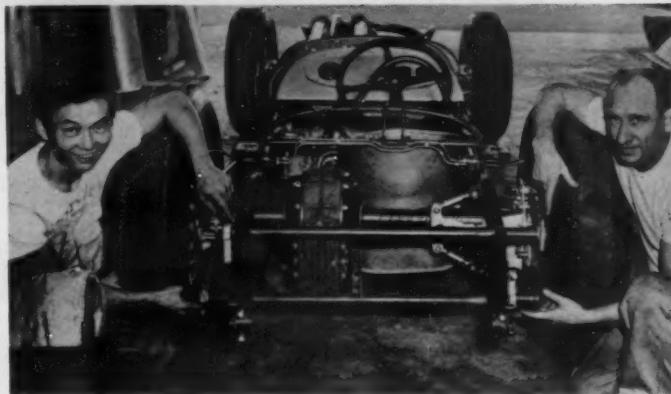


Preview . . . for old bricks



MECHANIC Joe Fukushima, *left*, and builder Eddie Kuzma point out lower-left, upper-right arrangement of rear torsion bars, *right*. The rear axle tube, wrapped in tape, rotates at wheel speed (it is the axle), so single trailing radius rods are also fitted, giving each wheel hub its own Watts linkage. Side location is achieved through walking beam arrangement at right which simulates a Panhard of great, but variable, length. Kuzma's engine, *above*, is upright, but set well to the left of center. Fuel tank is not covered with a decorative skin; instead, to save weight and space, it is built flush with the surface of the body and finished off with great care and smoothness. Incidentally, the immaculate finish of the American cars was the wonder of the Europeans at Monza, and is a great credit to their builders.

QUINN EPPERLY and Leo Goosen have made only slight changes to last year's winning design. Two new cars are being built and about the only alteration is that the lower tubes are dropped two inches, though upper ones remain the same. Giving but a slight reduction in CG height, this significantly increases the rigidity of the frame truss, *upper right*, without a weight penalty. Pioneers in use of the 18° engine installation, Epperly and Goosen take advantage of it to get a very low, smooth body profile, *below*. Meyer and Drake, convinced that the 18° offset is here to stay, now provide a new oil pan for the "right side" as well as external lines to drain the exhaust cam housing. On the top or "left side," the Hilborn injectors, *lower right*, are now shaped in a curve so that air enters horizontally, contributing again to the low hood line.





R. T. Horton clearing "Big Bump" at Brooklands, during 1932 "500", which he won at 96.29 mph—representative of...

Abingdon's

by Dennis May

IN RACE and record projects, same as in love and war, the hit-or-miss attack is OK as long as hits outnumber misses. The competition history of the MG Midgets that really were midgets — mostly 750s but with the 850 cc kin chipping in occasionally — is a study in the haphazard. Design and development progressed with about as much premeditation as a Calypso ballad. New chassis were built first and drawn afterwards. Uncalculated risk was a factor that Abingdon's technical faculty never feared and often embraced. Individuals' responsibilities crisscrossed and overlapped, the committee principle seldom went further than random meetings of minds in the mens' room, and if anybody had been pompous enough to write an interoffice memo, nobody would have read it.

But if MG did a loose job of knitting, they seldom dropped a stitch. During the period they built cars to the international Class H limit, 1929 to '35 inclusive, the *tour de force* became a habit, *tours de farce* intervening only rarely. A Midget was the first seven-fifty to do 100 miles per hour, a hundred in one hour, two miles per minute and a century and a half. MGs have been the world's fastest Class H cars without interruption since 1931, and still are. The little Abingdon factory, commanding views of an apple orchard on the south side and a cemetery to the north, built the only seven-fifties that ever won the TT and Britain's emasculated Le Mans, the Double Twelve at Brooklands. At Le Mans itself, a J4 Midget finished

sixth on general classification in 1933, highest placement in Sarthe history by a 750.

Combing the haystack for a key to these long-ago triumphs by MG, we come up with some seemingly irrelevant comments by SCI on Chevrolet's expensive but abortive Sebring campaign last May: "It was a wonderful organization . . . and the result was chaos." Conversely, the organization behind those midget-sized Midgets was a short remove from chaos . . . and the result was wonderful.

Right in character, it was partly by a godsend accident that EX120, the first 750 that MG ever built, found enough power to push it over the 100 mph hump in 1931. With George Eyston driving, EX120 turned 103.13 for five kilometers, 102.67 for five miles, 102.43 for ten kilometers, and 101.87 for ten miles. To avoid the power snuffing encumbrance of the silencers that were obligatory at Brooklands these runs were made at Monthléry. The French track, however, could only be turned counterclockwise, so the flying mile and kilometer records, which Malcolm Campbell had taken to 97 mph at Daytona on a supercharged Austin 7, had to be dealt with separately at Brooklands, where bidirectional motoring was in order. In the interval between the Monthléry and Brooklands gallops, somebody tore down the MG's carburetor and fuel lines and found them fouled up with a heavy greenish deposit of unknown chemistry and origin. Naturally thinking they'd stumbled on a short cut to a few bonus mph, they there-

upon purged the system — including the jet, which was halfway blocked — of every last molecule of the stuff. But this appendicitis operation, so far from curing the patient, had the opposite effect: with a clinically clean SU and attendant plumbing, EX120 at first wouldn't even hit a hundred for the kilometer. It was therefore a logical deduction that without the gratuitous infiltrations it certainly couldn't have lapped Monthléry at three figure speeds.

Subsequently, in the process of working back up to the Monthléry standard of performance, the engine blew to bits at Brooklands, throwing a conrod out through the side and over the top of the banking. Although EX120 was afterwards rebuilt and became the first 750 to average 100 for an hour, it fell to this car's direct successor, EX127, alias the Magic Midget, to relieve Austin of their flying mile and kilometer laurels.

It was the dramatic climax to EX120's 100 in the hour feat at Monthléry that led to George Eyston being temporarily classified, for the first and last time in his checkered life, as a missing person. After maintaining his target speed for sixty minutes, George, just to wrap everything up safely, kept going for a couple of extra laps. Halfway through the second of these, at a point on the Autodrome where he could be heard but not seen by entouragers assembled at the timekeeper's box, his motor cut dead. Fearing a wrecked engine but nothing worse, two of the MG men, Jackson and Marney, scrambled

aboard a pickup and lammed off in the direction of the silence. The silence, when they came alongside of it, wasn't as complete as they'd thought. EX120 was a roaring belching inferno of flames and smoke. Having often assisted in the difficult operation of insinuating George, a big man, into the Midget, a very small car with high gunwales, the rescuers couldn't conceive that Eyston could be anywhere else but slumped down inside the cockpit and frying fast. But when at last they managed to lever off one of the cockpit sides, they found, to their boundless relief and bewilderment, that EX120 was empty. To quote from *Maintaining the Breed*, by John W. Thornley, general manager of MG: "The banking was too steep to climb, and in any case the safety fence at the top was intact . . . But search over a wide area on the inside of the track failed to show the slightest sign of him".

What had happened was this. A few minutes after the timed hour elapsed a main bearing had failed, quickly running up such a temperature that the sump oil ignited. In seconds the flames started invading the cockpit. Cutting the throttle and eeling himself back and up towards his narrow manhole, Eyston bailed out at around sixty an hour, hitting the republic

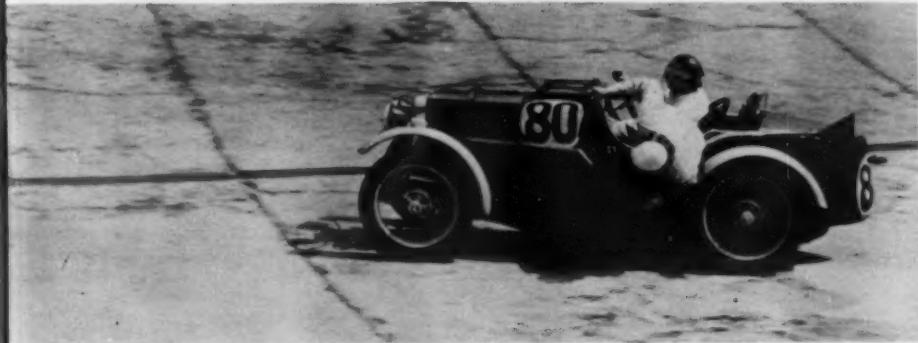
his scorching in EX120, he was obliged to pass. Into the resulting vacancy stepped the portly and ageing figure of Ernest Eldridge, a onetime Land Speed Record holder who was associated with Eyston in the manufacture of the Powerplus blower that MG used on all the supercharged Midgets of the period. Tailored around Eyston's personal measurements, the cockpit of EX127 was an interference fit on Eldridge, who therefore realized from the outset if this one caught fire or became lethally untenable from any other cause, he wouldn't stand a chance of getting out alive. To make the outlook worse, he only had one eye, having lost the other in a mishap while breaking records years earlier. The remaining eye had to gauge perspective by memory, and, hazy behind a lens, was in all respects an imperfect piece of optical equipment.

It was against this background of physical handicaps and infirmities that Eldridge, bare headed, without goggles and wearing a business suit, set up history's only daylight records with the help of headlamps. At Montlhéry, as readers familiar with the local geography will know, the road circuit branches obliquely out of the *piste de vitesse* on the back stretch. Eldridge figured he could feel his way

came by its striking and aerodynamically efficient body contours. Its efficiency was, needless to say, largely accidental; more precisely, it was the result of some intuitive visual guesswork by Reg (Jacko) Jackson, a rule of thumb practitioner whose thumb should by rights be pickled and put in a museum when he dies. Down at the plant during normal working hours, Jacko devoted his time exclusively to EX127's chassis and running gear, featuring angular offset transmission to locate the driver alongside the cardan shaft, his pants six inches from the road. If Jackson officially had any title at all it was probably head racing mechanic, although members of Cecil Kimber's Apostleship of the Sacred Octagon were mostly too busy and too dedicated to worry about titles. But whatever Jackson was or wasn't called on paper, it was tacitly accepted that EX127 was his personal baby, subject only to academic guidance from Eldridge as a freelancing consultant. It therefore never occurred to anyone to enquire about his plans for a body design, nor did Jackson confide them to anyone, not even the firm's founder and managing director, Kimber aforesaid.

When finally he did come across it was with a *fait accompli* in the form of a

Mighty Midgets



Above: Riding mechanic helps combat centrifugal force at one of the earlier events at Brooklands. This is a hotted-up M-type, founder of the midget line. Right: An R-type has heavy cornering roll, due to the parallelogram-action of suspension.



with an impact that knocked him cold. First on the scene, quite unknown to the MG contingent, was a gigantic Frenchman who'd been lapping lonesomely and practically forever in a stock Citroen sedan. With a strength befitting his physique, this benevolent gorilla had dangled Eyston into the back seat of the Cit and ducked out of the track precincts en route for hospital, unseen by anyone.

As it is perfectly possible that detailed drawings of EX120 still didn't exist when the car burned to a cinder, it was probably just as well that its offspring, EX127, was already completed at the time. It had in fact been taken over to France on the same trip for the purpose of setting new five kilometer figures. Eyston was booked for the driving role on this younger and faster Midget, but, detuned as he was by

safely around nine tenths of the high speed track but he had an uncomfortable feeling he might angle off onto the road course at the junction unless something special was devised to hit him in the retina. So a passenger car with headlamps blazing — and no occupants in case even candlepower was unavailing — was parked at the apex, facing upstream to fat Ernest's line of approach.

He made it — 110.28 mph for five kilometers. And that was the last record ever set by Ernest A. D. Eldridge, whose hand to hand fights with *Mephistopheles*, the 27 litre F.I.A.T., biggest car that ever raced at Brooklands, have passed into the hymnals of English speed sport.

The cosy aura pervading MG's racing department in the early 30s is reflected by the story of how EX127, the Magic Midget,

JUNE '58

quarter-scale model he'd built sub rosa in what was laughingly called his leisure time, evening and weekends. The miniature was a hybrid embodying elements of three Land Speed Record contenders of the day—rump in the likeness of Segrave's Golden Arrow, midworks after Campbell's current Blue Bird, nose simulating Don's Silver Arrow. Eyston, EX127's driver elect and himself a highly qualified automobile engineer, took a look at Jackson's homework and forthwith arranged for it to be windtunnel tested by Vickers Armstrong, the country's leading aircraft constructors.

Eyston, as it developed, never had any need of his gasmask, but little Bert Denly, who shared the 12-hour drive with George, surely had. At the time of year this campaign was mounted — December — it naturally wasn't possible to do the whole 12-hour job in daylight. Eyston accordingly had the Midget equipped with quickly detachable headlamps and planned a schedule in which the first and last stints would be run in darkness. George took the pre-dawn spell and assigned Denly

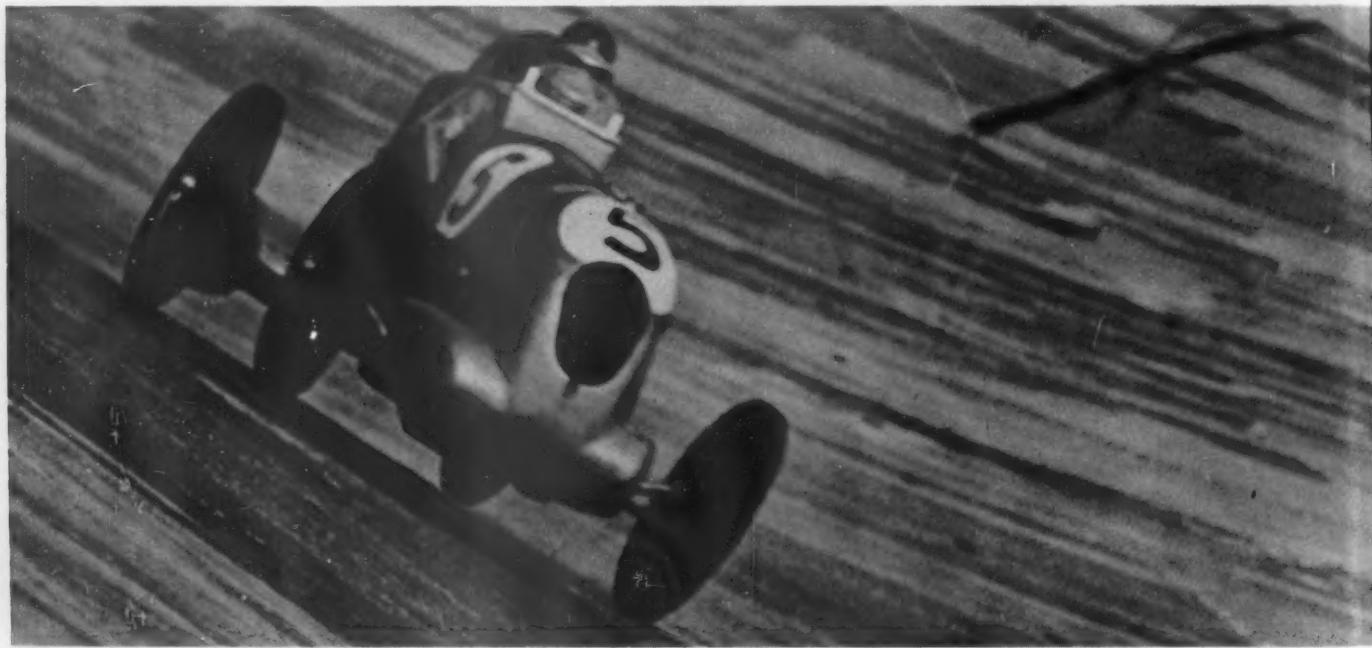
in the pan. Part of the rear main bearing, it afterwards transpired, had broken up. When the tank and sump were refilled, oil started gushing into the cockpit via the clutch, which for some inexplicable reason kept right on clutching throughout this ordeal by ooze. Not only liquid Castrol but gusts of hot oil vapor came through into the office, forcing Denly to jettison his bubble top to save himself from being gassed insensible. At the finish (the overall average, easily a record, was 86.67 mph) mechanics were able to wring over a gallon of "R" out of Bert's clothes. During the final hour he'd been sitting in a pool of it, up to the slits into his pants pockets.

Bert Denly, who had started out as a butcher's boy, at Byfleet, in the shadow of the Brooklands banking, then graduated through motorcycle racing to a coveted berth as George Eyston's lieutenant, was a trackcraftsman of unusual ability — at least the equal of Eyston himself. Moreover, as a Midgeteer he had one asset his boss didn't and never could possess. He was small. Very small. Catching on

this shape, and powered by a Q-type engine with a three bearing crankshaft, that it passed into the possession of Bobby Kohlrausch, the German racing driver and record man. Kohlrausch added a bronze cylinder head of his own design, reworked the *lebensraum* to locate his feet higher than his posterior, and, in 1935, drove his beloved "Magic", as he always called the car, at 140.6 for a flying mile. This record was destined to stand for eleven years, and when it was eventually beaten it goes almost without saying that another MG beat it. The last word in the argument, of course, came from Goldie Gardner, whose EX135 streamliner, fitted with a downscaled 6-cylinder Magnette engine, hit 159.15 mph in 1946. EX135, however, can't by any stretch of the imagination be classified as a Midget, and therefore doesn't really rate space here.

When Kohlrausch imported EX127 into Germany its hood bore decor in the form of a cloverleaf — his personal insignia — entwined with a Union Jack. On orders from his local *Gauleiter* he was forced

G. N. Harvey on Bankings in special-bodied single-seat Midget. Car set record 122.4 mph in Class H in '37, never beaten.



to the evening one. The only thing he overlooked was something to illuminate the instruments. Having a phantom set of thermometers and pressure gauges built into his belly by Mother Nature, Eyston wasn't personally inconvenienced by this omission, but the dial-happy Denly felt he had to be able to check revs, oil and water periodically. So, before setting out on the last and decisive round of the hunt, he strapped a flashlight to chest, beamed at the clock cluster.

If he hadn't done so the 12-hour record probably never would have fallen and another expensive engine might have been irreparably wrecked. Around the eleven hours juncture an ominous drop in oil pressure warned Bert to come in for investigation. The oil tank, piped to replenish the sump automatically as the level fell, was empty, and only a quart remained

to the potentialities of Bert's low frontal area, George renounced his own place on EX127's crew and arranged with MG for the cockpit to be narrowed to Denly's statistics; also he had the regular steering wheel replaced by a Tom Thumb tiller only ten inches in diameter. Even for Bert, who was strong for his size, this toy wheel made it dangerously difficult to keep the Midget going where he pointed it at the speeds he finally hit at Montlhéry. These included a lap at over 200 kilometers per hour in 1933, an exploit that fulfilled a personal ambition of his. Special badges were awarded to 200 kph lappers at Montlhéry and he was the first man to cop one on less than 2 litres.

In the ultimate stages of its development, fitted with a Zoller blower running a boost pressure of 39 psi, EX127 developed 146 horse at 7500 rpm. It was in

to overpaint the Union Jack. Nonetheless, these tests proved, not for the first time, that guesswork by Jackson was worth a bookful of trigonometry, and an upsized body was constructed without a single modification being made. A subsequent embellishment was added on location at Pendine beach, South Wales, during prepping for record attempts in 1932: on the suggestion of a movie cameraman who'd been assigned to the story, exterior screw heads little larger than a lentil were painstakingly faired off with Plasticene, a species of modelmaking goo popular with kids in Britain.

However, even this masterstroke failed to secure success for the bid (the target, later attained by the same car, was two miles per minute), because during a long and exasperating sojourn at the beach the weather and the state of the sands alter-

nated between bad and worse. The only time the conditions were momentarily favorable, and Eyston did get his clog down to the tune of 122 mph by hand timing, the ink ran dry in the RAC's box of chronometric tricks and the spurt couldn't be officially recognized. Even the courtly Eyston, eye-witnesses recall, conjugated some pretty irregular verbs at the RAC's expense on this occasion.

Reg Jackson always had and still has a rare gift for spur of the moment improvisations. The Pendine stopover in 1932 recalls a typically humorous and practical makeshift of his. By prearrangement, each time George Eyston made the first of his two-way runs, Jacko followed him down the foreshore in a pickup for the purpose of changing plugs at the far end before the turnabout. The *super-laggera* EX127 wasn't weighty enough to sink into the soft and sea-soaked sand while parked, but the truck was. So each time Jackson alighted to check George's candles he tethered the truck's steering onto full lock with his handkerchief, engaged low gear, and turned 'er loose to amble around in circles, driverless.

It was Jacko, too, who licked another problem arising out of this Pendine venture. Prior to the South Wales sortie, Eyston, with forebodings about the conditions that might have to be faced in a region notorious for bad weather, had invited suggestions for some way of getting clear straight-ahead vision. A normal windshield, he feared would quickly become obscured by flung spray and sand particles. It would have, too. Well, Jacko had the answer, as usual. This took the form of a laterally bifurcated windshield of peculiar design he'd noticed on some of Vickers' planes during his earlier visits to their windtunnel. The lower half had a single pane, the upper half dual panes with an air space between them, and the two sections were gapped horizontally at the sighting line. High pressure wind hitting the nether pane would, according to theory, escape obliquely upwards between the two upper ones, and none would enter the cockpit.

They made a mockup of this device at MG, mounted it on a car and conducted tests that were a characteristic blend of Jacksonian method and madness. With a straightman driving, Reg seated himself sidesaddle on the hood, facing backwards, and solemnly threw handfuls of confetti at the aperture. The stuff obligingly angled up between the dual panes and nary a speck went into the driver's eyes. So they adapted the thing to the Magic Midget, with most satisfactory results.

Following his foretaste of cremation at the wheel of EX120, George Eyston decided it would be prudent to wear an asbestos suit for all of his future record attempts on Midgets. And when EX127, its cockpit fully enclosed, was shipped to Monthléry to draw a second bead on the two miles per minute target they'd flubbed at Pendine, he took sartorial precaution a stage further by wearing a fireman's gasmask. On "the Captain", the least theatrical man in racing, these bizarre effects seemed to sit rather uneasily, but they provided the news photographers with some useful lensfodder.

The French timekeepers contrived to keep their ink wet for Eyston and he duly cracked the 120 mph nut. This exploit, at the back end of 1932, was part of a wholesale records onslaught involving two Midgets — EX127 and one of the then new J3 supercharged sports cars. The former picked every international Class H plum up to twelve hours (excluding the ones already held by MG), and the J3 continued the kill clear to twenty-four hours, taking in the distance records covered by this span. When the '32 season closed there was only one name left on the Class H books — MG.

Daimler-Benz, whose masterminds would have laughed themselves ill if they'd been privy to Abingdon's hit-or-miss way of life, thought it worth while to acquire the Magic Midget from Bob. Nobody knows to this day whether they asked him or just told him to surrender the car.

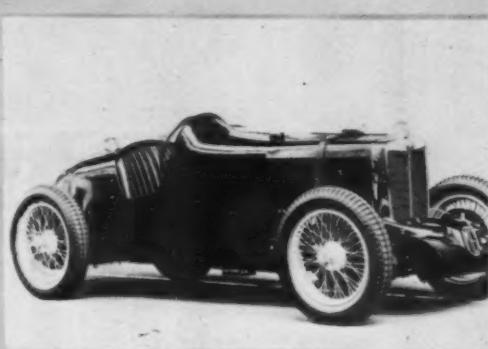
In races *per se*, the immortal EX127's career was limited and unsuccessful. I believe it only contested two events and it didn't finish either. The result of the first, though, brought ample consolation to the Octagon mystique. This was the 500 at Brooklands in 1932, which, after the "Magic's" spell was broken by a pulverized piston, was won by a privateer Midgeteer on a C-type fitted with a special trackster body. The driver's name, for the record, was R. T. Horton, and his race average, 96.29 mph, compares interestingly with the same year's winning speed at Indianapolis: 104.14 mph by Fred Frame's Miller. Don't forget the MG's displacement was 746 cc, as against the Miller's 2459 cc.

This belated reference to the C-type or Monthléry Midget, the first production racing car that ever came out of Abingdon, necessitates a backtrack to 1931, in which year this impudent insect erupted with stunning effect onto the British racing scene. The story of its speed debut can be told in a couple of paragraphs. By a piece of timing that was probably accidental but was to prove salutary beyond Kimber's wildest dreams, the 750 cc Monthléry Midget was publicly announced as a stock competition line a month or two before the date fixed for the Double Twelve at Brooklands. Attracted by its sensationally low price, less than 300 pounds sterling, ready to race, and with expectations fired by the fact that in the previous year's Double Twelve a trio of privately owned 850 cc Midgets of much milder mould had collected the team prize, well-known amateurs beat a path to the sign of the Octagon, hoping to buy these hot looking Cs. Orders were forthwith accepted for as many as could be built in the little time remaining before Britain's two-piece Le Mans was due to come off. In the event, fifteen were thrown together — but securely — in the twelve days immediately preceding the first training session for the race. Quantitatively, 1931 turned out a "750 year" for the Double Twelve; out of a total of 49 entries, 23 came into the Class H bracket and 13 of these were brand new and untried C Midgets.

Came the day and, with the rather patronizing handicap treatment their deb status seemed to rate, the Cs simply ate



J2 Midget of 1932, one of the most popular sports cars to come from Abingdon.



Standard type Q-type racing car with two seat body, Zoller blower for 113 hp.



Standard J4 MG, fastest member of the J family. Note SU dashpot protruding from supercharger between dumbirons.



This you recognize—EX127, the Magic Midget, with cockpit cowling lifted to reveal worried looking George Eyston.

(Continued on page 48)

With 85 very competent cubic inches under the hood, the Husky can do an innocent-looking 71 mph on the highway.



SCI ROAD TEST:

HILLMAN HUSKY

Windblown but willing, it's a hustler and a hauler

IF YOU'D LIKE a sports car, really need a wagon, and only have a one car garage, take a look at what the Hillman man will sell you for \$1635. Appropriately called the Husky, it is at the same time both a hustler and a hauler.

More inclined toward the hustle than the haul, we picked up our test machine from Ken Langridge; but the tires were to the point where, for high speed cornering, it was almost unbearable. We released some of the air, settling on 26 psi front and 22 rear. The softness at the aft end allowed the rear to swing out when cornering, going around the front, as it were. In this way, even if the front had a tendency to be lazy, it was compensated for by an energetic rear. With the tires properly inflated, anyone can corner at quite respectable speeds.

Regular SCI road test readers know that "respectable speeds" mean just that. On occasion we've taken test machinery around the Lime Rock course at speeds far above anything the designers had in mind. It is not unusual, then, for us to spin out. But this affords information, too: a car that stays on the road when it's out of control has a lot to be said for it. On the sweeping right turn just ahead of the Esses, there is a nasty little hook where the radius suddenly decreases. This is where we pirouetted. Going into the turn at something like full power in third gear, it was apparent that this one was going to be different. We over-corrected with a hard cut of the wheel which swung the tail to the *inside* and caused all kinds of gyrations and contortions. We leaned so heavily that the driver saw the road out of the passenger's window. When we finally got the rubber back on the road, we negotiated the next fifty feet of the course *backwards*. This, we believe, constitutes a spin. Nonetheless, we drove the Husky with a lot more confidence after this incident, as we trusted both its ability to be handled and its predictable reaction if we goofed.

But under the normally frustrating conditions of driving

with the non-sporting crowd, the Husky stays level and smooth, regardless of road surface. Sharp bumps resolve themselves into more noise than jolt, for when riding with the windows closed, the unit-construction body seems to spread the impact over the whole car. Spring busters are negotiated with only one pitch, as the action of the shocks prevents inordinate vertical movements. The small discommoding caused by the sound of the bumps is a small price to pay for the benefits of a strong, rattle-free body.

But this is not to say that the Husky is without fault: just as Achilles had a vulnerable heel, the Husky cannot be called the epitome of directional stability. Fact is, it's about as streamlined as an Essex, which in strong winds invokes two kinds of penalties.

When driving at moderate speeds (40 to 60 mph), every gust throws the car out of line. If the gust hits from the sides, the Husky tends to drift with it. Also, it takes a little more steering to turn into the wind. If the breeze quarters, a little more wheel is required than would normally be needed, until the turning arc begins. Then there is need for hurried correction, as suddenly you find you've gone too far. Hillman evidently feels that the Husky is made to carry cargo, and the only way to do that is to provide space. Since this space must come from somewhere, adding it to the top will impose far fewer penalties than adding to the wheelbase or overhang. In other words, they kept the Husky maneuverable, but made it slightly higher and a lot squarer. It gives the appearance of having been shaped by contact with one of the "forward look" boys. But we feel they made a wise decision. More about the second penalty later.

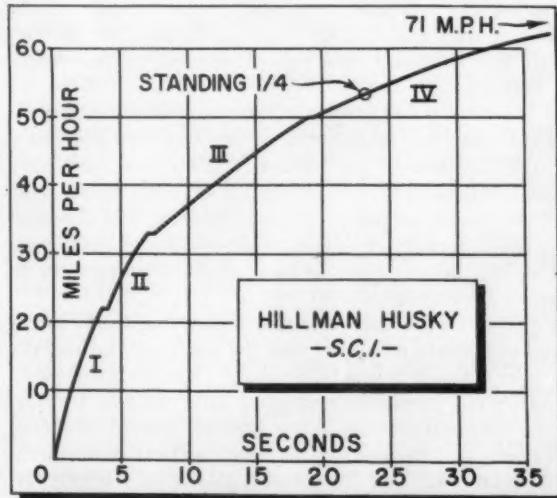
Our judgments are based on two weeks of in-town use — going to the station, shopping, taking a load of neighbor's children to the beach, *et al.* This kind of driving, mostly within town-limit speeds, is the *forte* of the Husky.

Transmission ratios have been especially selected for in-town driving. Admittedly, a four-speed close-ratio box is the

(Continued on page 46)



With rear seat up, cargo space is plenty of room for our German Shepherd, top. Seat folds flat to double cargo capacity. Rear door opens via push button.



Pronounced body roll is evident as Husky takes a bend at Lime Rock. In normal street maneuvers there's less sway, and even when loaded, car handles well, gives a smooth ride.

HILLMAN HUSKY

PERFORMANCE

TOP SPEED:

Two-way average	72 mph
Fastest one-way run	73 mph

ACCELERATION:

From zero to	seconds
30 mph	5.9
40 mph	12.2
50 mph	19.0
60 mph	32.4
Standing $\frac{1}{4}$ mile	23.3

SPEEDOMETER CORRECTION:

Indicated	Actual
20	20.0
30	29.5
40	37.0
50	46.5
60	55.0
70	63.0

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Average driving (approx.)	
60 mph)	24 mpg

BRAKING EFFICIENCY 10 successive emergency stops from 50 mph, just short of locking wheels, finished with approx. $\frac{1}{2}$ pedal, however no noticeable additional pedal pressure was required for the 10th stop. Recovery of most of the pedal was very rapid.

SPECIFICATIONS

POWER UNIT:

Type	4 cylinder, ohv
Valve Arrangement	Push rod & rocker arm, dual spring
Bore & Stroke (Engl. & Met.)	3.00 x 3.00 in (76 x 76 mm)
Stroke/Bore Ratio	1/1
Displacement (Engl. & Met.)	85 cu in (1399 cc)
Compression Ratio	8.0/1
Carburetion by	Single Zenith 20 VM8 downdraft
Max. Power	46 hp @ 4400 rpm
Max. Torque	71 lb-ft @ 2000 rpm

DRIVE TRAIN:

Transmission ratios	I.....	3.567
	II.....	2.47
	III.....	1.49
	IV.....	1.00
Final drive ratio (test car)	4.78
Axle torque taken by.....	Leaf springs	

CHASSIS:

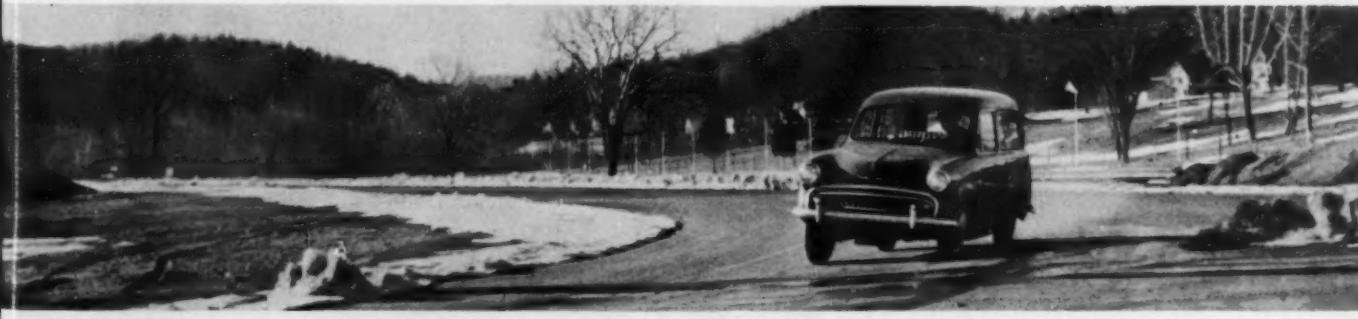
Wheelbase	86 in
Front Tread	49 in
Rear Tread	48.5 in
Suspension, front	Coil springs, wishbones
Suspension, rear	Semi-elliptic leaf springs
Shock absorbers	Double-acting telescopic
Steering type	Borman worm and nut
Steering wheel turns L to L	2.5
Turning diameter	31.5 ft.
Brake type	Lockheed, two leading shoe, hydraulic
Brake lining area	92 sq ins
Tire size	5.00 x 15

GENERAL:

Length	153.5 in
Width	60.5 in
Height	60.9 in
Weight, test car	2130 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R, with driver	53/47
Fuel capacity	7.5 U. S. gallons

RATING FACTORS:

Bhp per cu in	0.54
Bhp per sq in piston area	1.62
Torque (lb-ft) per cu in	0.84
Pounds per bhp-test car	46.4
Piston speed @ 60 mph	2000 fpm
Piston speed @ max bhp	2200 fpm
Brake lining area per ton	86 sq in



RA SCARAB MK 1



by Griff Borgeson

ENOUGH OF THIS," said Lance Reventlow to Warren Olson, who looks after his machines. "Let's start doing things our way and see what happens."

This decision took place last August as the two headed back from England by air, after a race at Brands Hatch. Reventlow had found a lot of satisfaction in his Cooper, Maserati and Mercedes-Benz, but he had known for at least two years that building and campaigning his own cars would be much more rewarding. He and Olson had poured a mass of man-hours into mulling the possibilities of founding a private marque, of building a good competition car from scratch. But until the Fall of '57 all this remained in the talking stage.

Once the project got the green light things happened fast. The car's basic design was completed in weeks and actual construction began in mid-September. In less than six months from the go signal the Reventlow Scarab prototype was ready for shakedown runs.

Its first airing was on the Willow Springs course. The car was not let out at all; just toolled around to make sure that things worked as intended and that the pieces stayed put. All was not perfect, naturally, and changes were made. Then the car went back to Willow.

This time Chuck Daigh tried opening it up a bit. He took three warm-up laps, then knocked two seconds off the track record on the fourth. A few more laps and then he leaned on it a shade harder. Result: four seconds off the fastest time ever turned at Willow Springs. More changes were made. Then near-record laps were turned at Riverside. Then more changes.

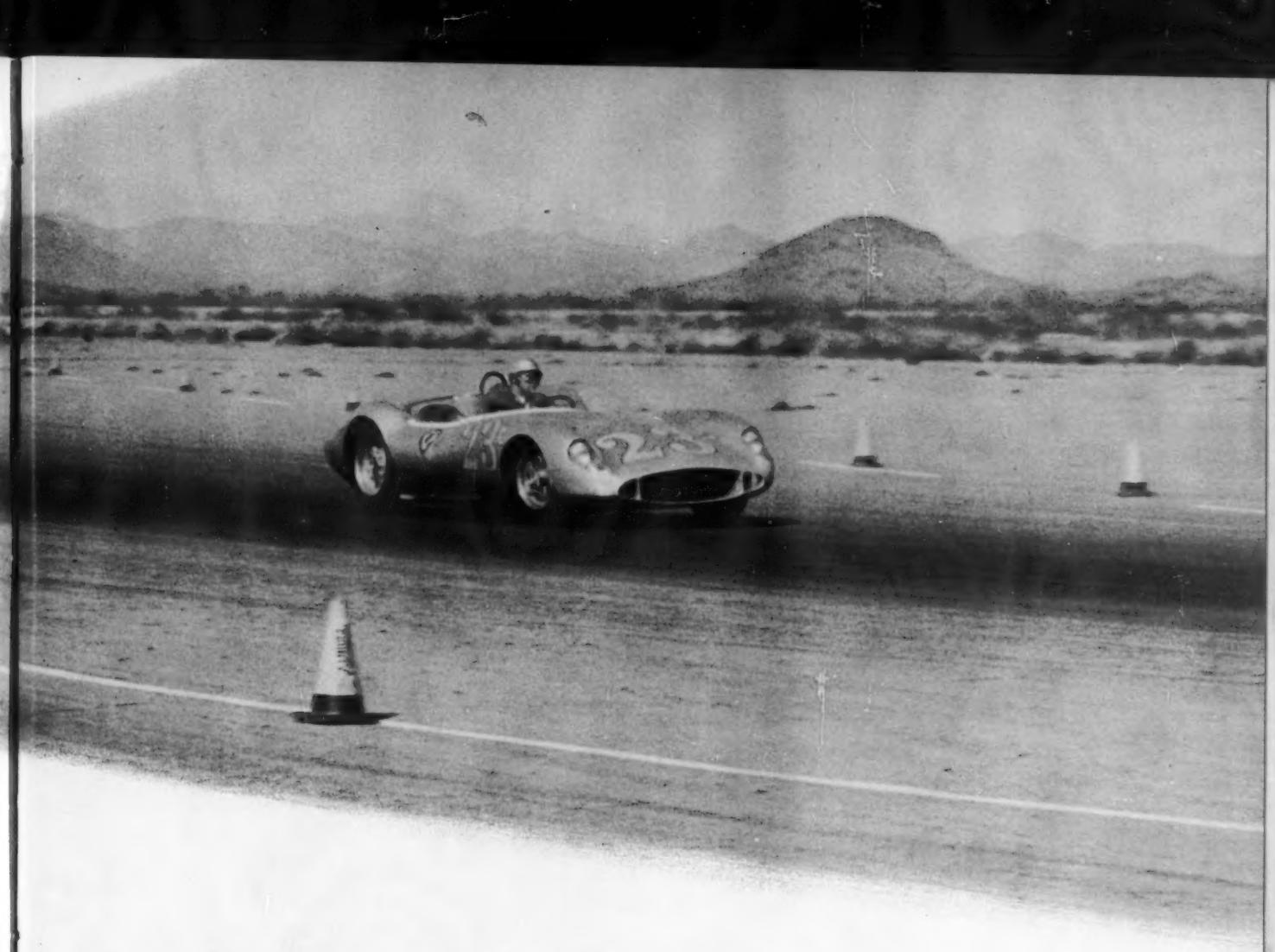
The Scarab's latest outing was at Phoenix. A number of good drivers put it through its paces there, among them Richie Ginther. He had not driven the car before. He took two laps to feel the machine out, then got on it. On his third lap he broke the course record. He kept going faster and, in five laps, broke the record three times. When he rolled into the pits he was shocked to learn the quickness of his times. He had trimmed three seconds from the lap record and felt sure that he could knock another three off his own time before he ever began to frighten himself. The car shows every sign of being a winner in the making. How was it made?

"Our basic concept," says Olson, "was very simple. The car itself is very simple. We had no intention of out-horsing Enzo but we did feel that we might get more power to the road, longer, than the cars we were up against. We weren't at all sure that we could do it but we were sure it was worth a good, hard try."

From the outset the project has been characterized by a methodical, both-feet-on-the-ground, businesslike air. First-off the legal instrument was formed, within which the business would function. It was called Reventlow Automobiles Inc. and has Lance as president and treasurer and Olson as secretary and general manager. Vice president and legal counsel to the firm is Stan Mullen, prominent pioneer in Southern California sports car racing.

"The primary problem," says Olson, "in building any car is finding experienced talent; and the more specialized the car the more difficult this is likely to be." But with this problem, RAI's good judgment and good luck ran side by side. While the corporation was being formed, Olson contacted Dick Trautman, co-designer of the famous Trautman-Barnes Special (SCI, Oct. '56), and with his help began laying the mechanical groundwork: obtaining needed building space, machine tools and other equipment, as well as defining the car's fundamental specifications. Then Tom Barnes was asked to join the staff as frame specialist and Chuck Daigh was approached to take over in the engine and drive-line department and to serve as chief test driver. Fortunately for the project, each of these experts was available: Trautman and Barnes with years of experience with Kurtis-Kraft; Daigh with years with Clay Smith and Bill Stroppe, including a key role in most of the Mexican Road Races. Later Emil Diedt joined the team. Among his masterpieces in metal are the immortal Indy Blue Crown Specials. It's a formidable crew.

In addition to their common fund of long, expert experience, and precisely because of it, the men of the RAI staff all approach their work with the same attitude: one of cal-



culated conservatism. Optimism has no place in their thinking and no claims are made for performances in past, present or future. Hopes are exaggerated negatively rather than positively. That these guys know their jobs has been proved too many times for any of them to have to point to the fact. And each of them knows that no matter how many variables may be brought under ideal control, there's always luck to foul the best-laid plans.

This dead-pan policy is a good one. For example, the original intent had been to campaign the car in international competition—a worthy intention that might have been trumpeted to the tune of wild public applause. But then, when it was far too late for the development of another engine for the '58 season, the FIA adopted the three-liter limit and that automatically cancelled Reventlow's immediate overseas plans which, fortunately, had been kept quiet. Now the car will race in the U.S., whenever and wherever possible.

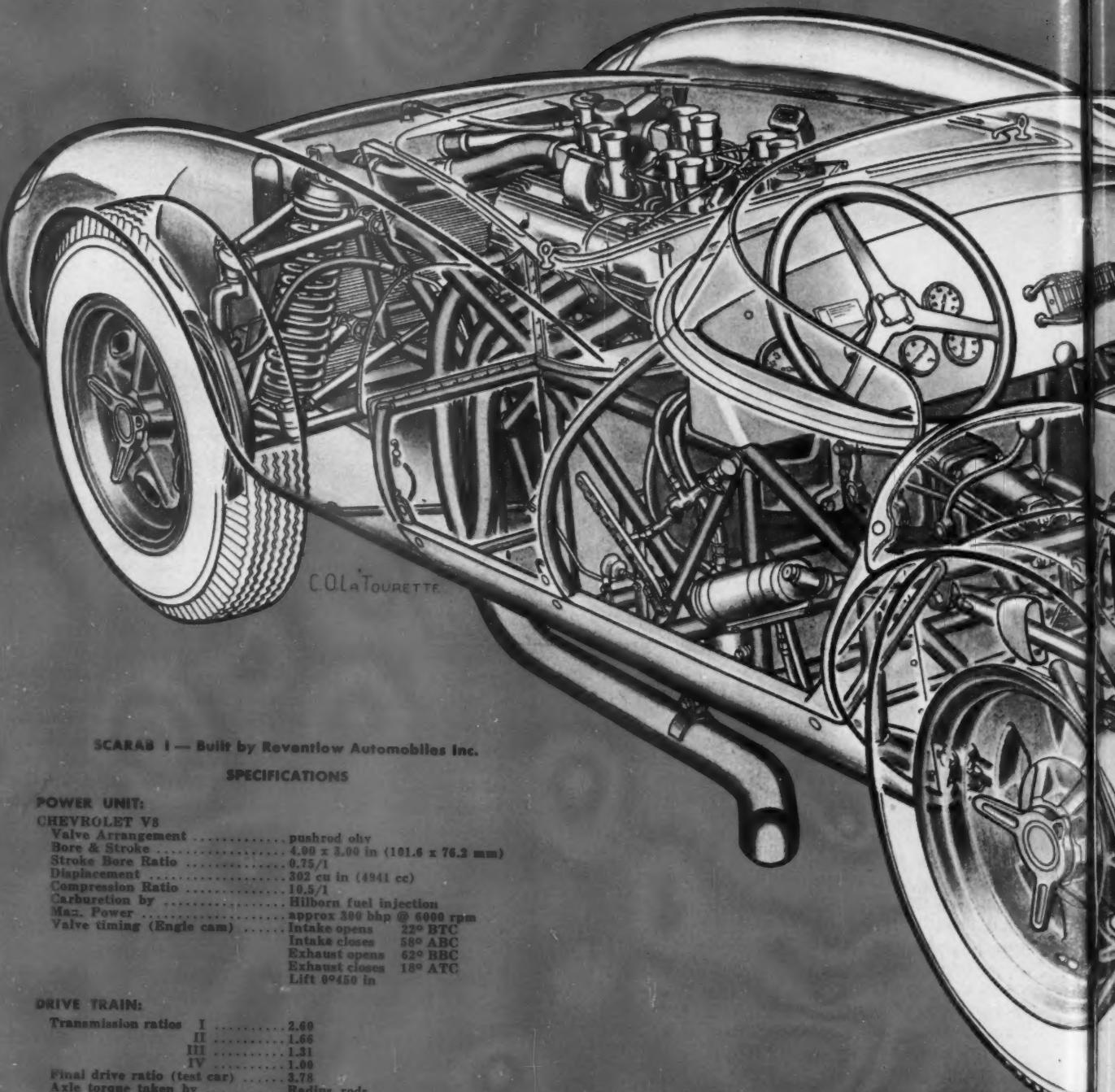
The Chev V8 engine was chosen for the car because of its light weight, rather good reliability and revving flexibility. But this had minor direct bearing on the objective of "applying more horsepower to the road longer than anything we have had experience with." So the first decisions that had to be made dealt with the running gear... with the four wheels and how they were to be driven, suspended and steered. After this the frame was designed to which these components could be attached.

The suspension is simple and fairly standard: short-long wishbones and coil springs at the front and de Dion axle with coil springs at the rear. A Watts linkage, shown in LaTourette's drawing, locates the rear axle assembly transversely and radius rods provide fore-and-aft location along with torque control. The rear axle center-section is a

modified Halibrand quick-change for which final drive cogs are available in fine increments from 1.94 to 7.35 to one. The one unusual rear axle detail is a creation of Trautman's: wheel hubs that are almost infinitely adjustable for toe-in and camber. Each hub contains two large plates and the inner face of the outer plate is machined at an angle to its outer face. The outer plates alone may be rotated relative to the inner plates, or both may be rotated relative to the de Dion tube. This permits vernier-like adjustments of as little as one-quarter degree. The best setting in practice has proved to be about one-eighth degree toe-in and three-quarters degree negative camber.

The method of attack for "getting more power to the road longer" is disarmingly simple. It boils down to using the latest in wheels, tires and spring rates. The springs are very soft: the rate of the front coils is 125 pounds and that of the rear is 100 pounds. Danger of bottoming is eliminated mainly by an ample six inches of spring travel and is reduced further by 70-30 Monroe telescopic shocks with big, $1\frac{3}{8}$ inch pistons. The theory is that the wheels will spend more time on the ground in proportion to the lowness of the spring rate.

The Scarab runs standard Halibrand magnesium wheels with pin drive and knock-off hub nuts. No significant gain in unsprung weight is claimed for these wheels over those of the European competition but the extreme width of their rims—equal to the tires' cross sections—confers an advantage. The tires' tendency to roll on the rims during cornering is reduced, which permits the use of lower tire inflation pres-



SCARAB I — Built by Reventlow Automobiles Inc.

SPECIFICATIONS

POWER UNIT:

CHEVROLET V8

Valve Arrangement	pushrod ohv
Bore & Stroke	4.90 x 3.00 in (101.6 x 76.2 mm)
Stroke Bore Ratio	0.75/1
Displacement	302 cu in (4941 cc)
Compression Ratio	10.5/1
Carburetion by	Hilborn fuel injection
Max. Power	approx 300 bhp @ 6000 rpm
Valve timing (Engine cam)	Intake opens 22° BTCA Intake closes 58° ABC Exhaust opens 62° BBC Exhaust closes 18° ATC Lift 0°450 in

DRIVE TRAIN:

Transmission ratios	I	2.60
	II	1.66
	III	1.31
	IV	1.00
Final drive ratio (test car)		3.78
Axle torque taken by		Radius rods

CHASSIS:

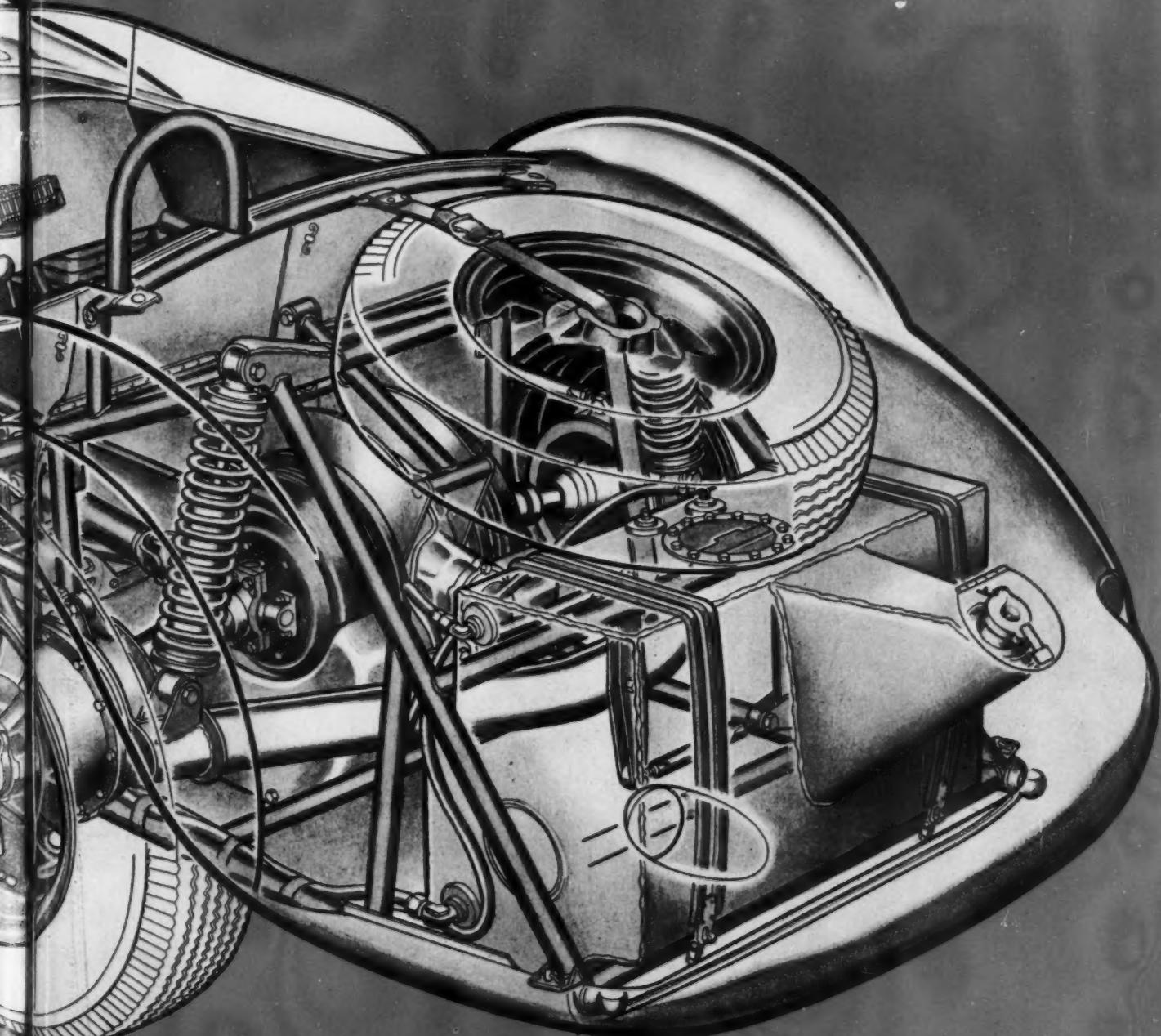
Wheelbase	92 in
Front Tread	52 in
Rear Tread	49 in
Suspension, front	Coil springs, short-long wishbones, stabilizer bar.
Suspension, rear	Coil springs, de Dion axle, Watts linkage, radius rods
Shock absorbers	Monroe telescopic, 1.375 in piston
Steering type	Rack and pinion
Steering wheel turns L to L	2
Turning diameter	40 ft
Brake type	Bendix hydraulic; rear brakes inboard
Brake lining area	212 sq ins
Tire size	6.00 x 16 front, 7.00 x 16 rear

GENERAL:

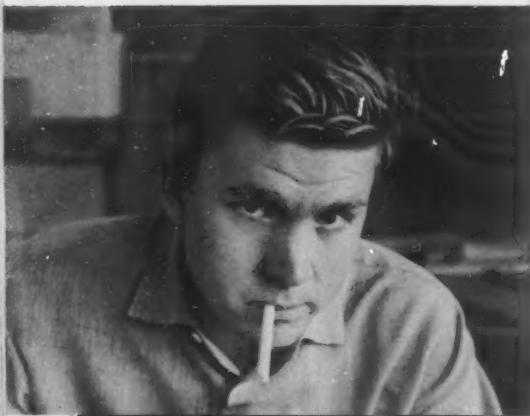
Width	59.5 in
Height	31 in at cowl, 38 in at headrest
Weight, test car	1725 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R	42/58
Fuel capacity	25 U. S. gallons

RATING FACTORS:

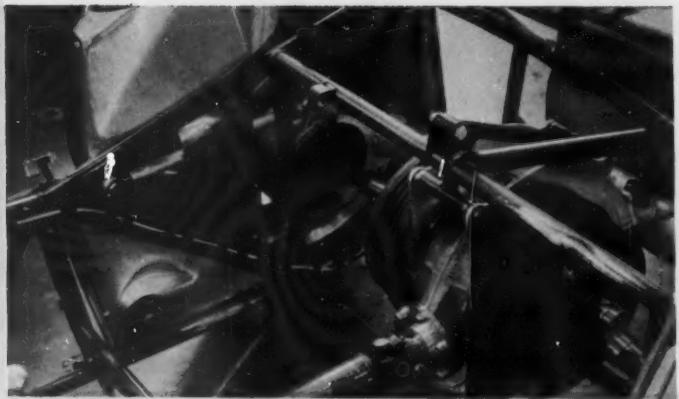
Pounds per bhp—test car	5.7
Brake lining area per ton (test car)	246 sq ins
MPH per 1000 rpm (3.75 gears)	23.8



Photos by Bob Coogan



Top to bottom, Lance Reventlow, Scarab's sponsor; Chuck Daigh, his engine expert and test driver; general manager Warren Olson.

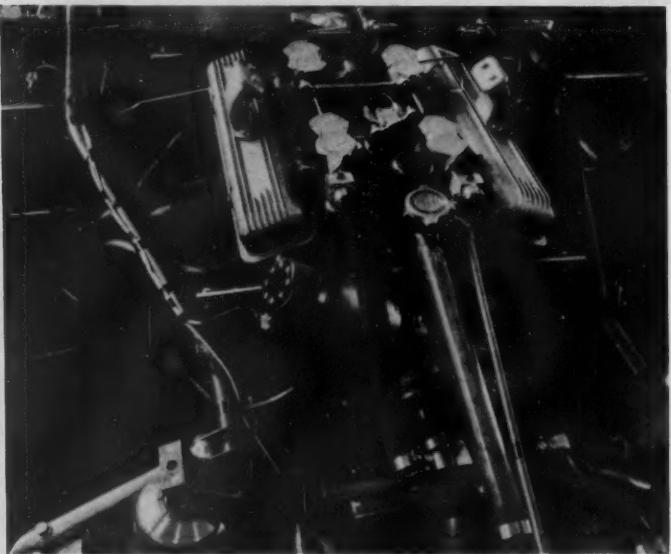


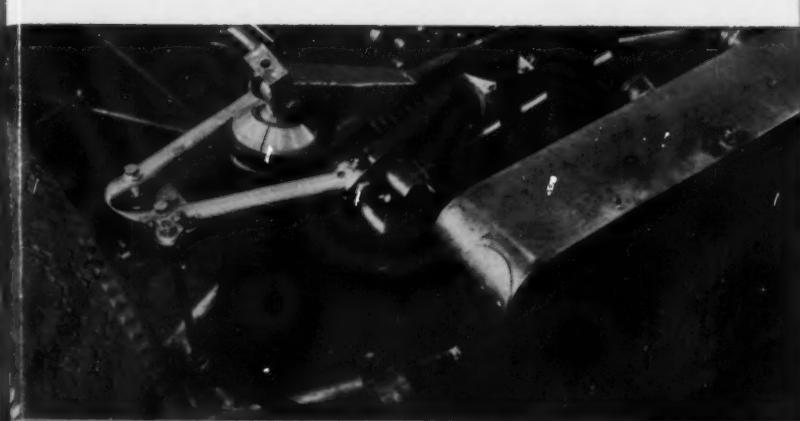
De Dion rear axle ends in large, two-piece hub housings which permit vernier adjustment of camber and toe-in.



Above, even with the hood off, the Scarab's lines are smoothly suggestive of the high speeds which can be attained.

Below, the one-eighth over-bore CheV-8 is fed by four pairs of Hilborn injectors, ignited by a Scintilla Vertex magneto driven off crankshaft nose, and cooled by directly driven water pump.

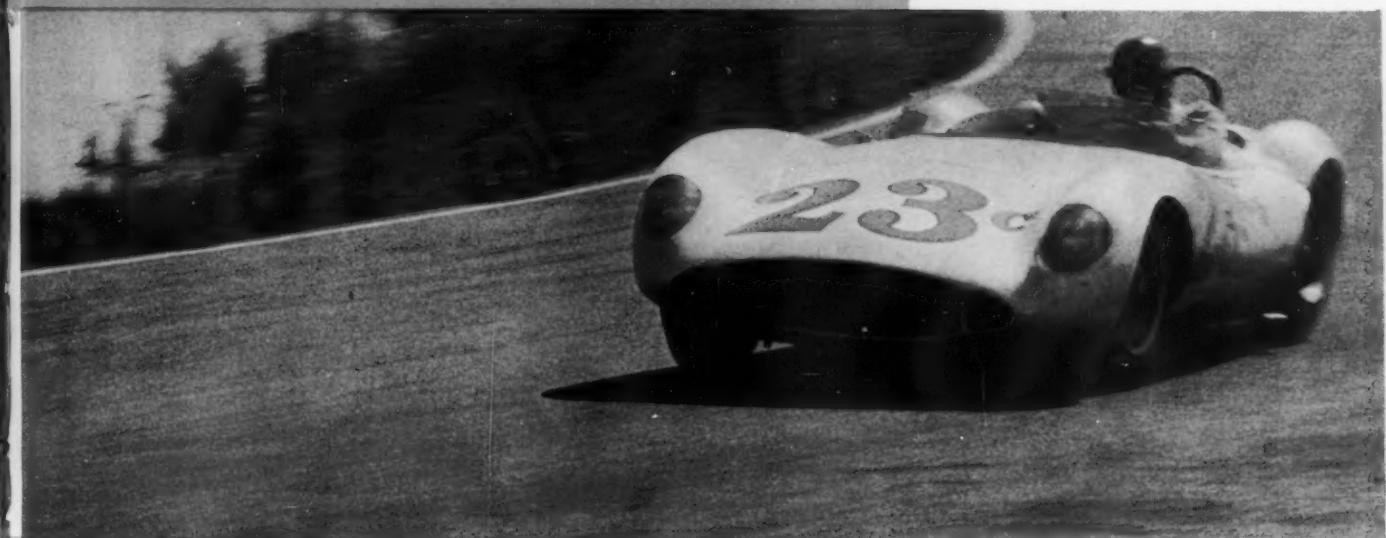




Super-light tubular wishbones connect modified Ford spindles, Monroe coil-shocks to the tubular frame. Attaching flanges encircle frame, a good detail.



Monstrous Alfin drums are under development.

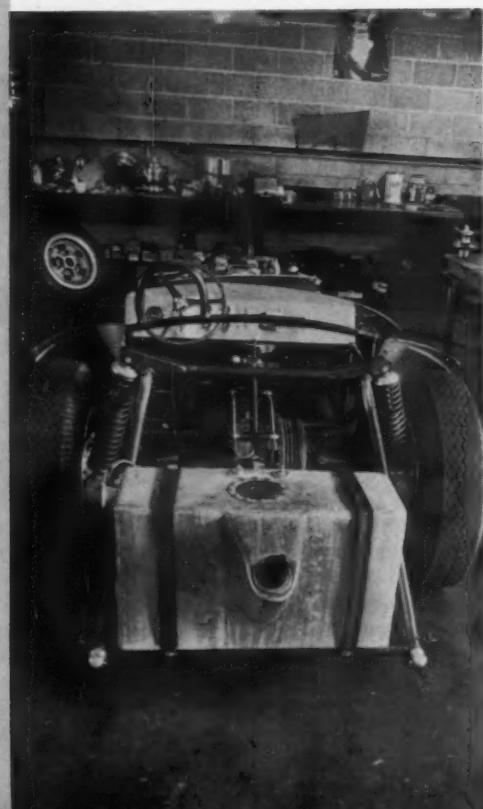


Above, some roll is evident as Kessler breezes through a fast bend. All drivers have praised its handling and with 5.7 lbs/hp, it won't be slow.

Still larger 45 gallon tank can be mounted.



Below, steering wheel is much nearer horizontal than is usual in sports cars, but this Indy trick enables the driver to put his shoulders into it, reducing fatigue. No room under hood for generator, so it's in cockpit.



(Continued on page 62)

SCI

ROAD TEST:

MGA



*Coming and going, it
has urbane distinction . . .*

IN SCI's TEST report on the MGA roadster (Jan.'57) we praised the quality built into that modestly-priced car and lamented its very few but discordant sub-standard incongruities, such as inner door panels of impermanent-looking fiberboard. These economies have been eliminated from the MGA coupe, making it consistently and harmoniously a quality product. It is the best-built MG to date and by far the most luxurious and comfortable.

The coupe's base price is \$300 higher than the roadster's current \$2450. Why that much difference? A great deal of the extra cost is in the doors: in roll-up windows, no-draft vents, chrome window frames and distinctive, well-engineered external door handles which do not exist, along with locks, on the open car. Then there is the top itself and the high cost of the dies for stamping it. And there are the wraparound windshield and the extreme-wraparound rear window that give superb visibility and are important extra-cost items.

The MGA roadster, being very aggressively a sports car, is noisy. Because of the resonant characteristics inherent in a metal top the coupe might be expected to be even noisier. But it is quieter, due to careful sound-proofing of the cockpit, even to foam-rubber insulation of the firewall. The sounds that do reach the occupants are pleasantly appropriate to what the "A" actually is: a touring-competition vehicle. The blipped engine revs with that exhilarating whir that usually is a mark of good high-performance machinery and the gearbox growls and sings, reminding the forgetful that under this sophisticated exterior the classical MG breed has

been maintained. Although perfectly audible, engine noise does not begin to become obtrusive in top gear until about 4000 or 70 mph is reached. Beyond that point it becomes loud indeed and it takes on a strongly hammering note.

We feel that the finest single feature of the MGA is its road-holding and this is linked with its worst aspect in the inexorable way that the sides of a coin are linked. The A's cornering ability is quite awe-inspiring—the sort you might expect to find in a much more costly competition car. It is a very real source of safety and a great source of gratification to the driver, whether he be a cautious novice or jaded veteran. The car is fiercely tenacious in its side-bite, even in pouring rain, and practically devoid of lean or tire noise under high centrifugal g's. But this laudable performance is purchased at the cost of a naggingly choppy ride, even with soft tire pressures of 20 psi. With the tires inflated to recommended high-speed pressures the ride becomes definitely abusive.

The hard springs and shock absorbers of the MGA smooth bad bumps very well, and we never felt the suspension bottom on the roughest roads. It's the small surface irregularities that are telegraphed to the car's occupants with a staccato chop, making minimum tire pressure more or less mandatory for general touring. This criticism of the MGA is one that will do the car no harm in the eyes of hardened *aficionados*. But it most definitely will limit the appeal of this otherwise extremely appealing car in the broad market that potentially is its own in this country. Equal cornering ability can be combined with a genuinely comfortable ride



Coupe

... and it's perfect for racing, ideal for rallies

through major change in suspension design. To date, MG is under no compulsion to take this step. But the day will come when competitive conditions will demand it and we hope that MG is planning with this in mind.

At the moment, MG's acceptance in the U. S. continues to climb. MG sales never have been higher: against approximately 1300 cars sold in the western U. S. in '56, over 3000 were sold in '57. This still is a seller's market and the reason for the increase in sales is an increase in supply. The augmented supply is due not so much to increased production or shipping facilities as it is to the practice of crating cars for shipment. This permits cars to be stacked two deep in the holds of vessels that formerly carried only a single level of cars per deck. The crating, however, is costly and it contributes to a sizeable increase in the cars' retail price. Nevertheless, MG can still argue with persuasion that its car is the lowest-priced *real* sports car on the U. S. market.

It seems correct to say that the MGA's roadholding is its best feature because it is such a vividly salient one. But the A's brakes are just as excellent and are completely above criticism, certainly as far as the hardest conceivable touring use is concerned (for racing, special hard linings are readily available). These brakes registered a virtually nil reaction to our telling ten-stop fade test. And the A's steering also belongs in the superlative category. The rack and pinion mechanism is quick, free of backlash, light but solid in its feel, with just the right touch of self-righting action and with no noticeable communication of road shock to the adjustable spring-spoke steering wheel.

The MGA's performance is thrusty enough to make it an exhilarating car to drive, as its lively acceleration times point up. The transmission gear ratios are very happily chosen and good acceleration for highway passing is available in third up to at least 70 mph. Our test coupe's gearbox contained a bug that the roadster's did not: the load spring that is intended to hold the shift lever on the right-hand (third and fourth gear) side of the H-shaped shift pattern did not function, making it a very easy matter to nick first on an upshift from second to third; easy to remedy, but a point to watch. As with the roadster, it was not difficult to land in reverse by mistake when dropping from third to second. A very comfortable arm rest runs between the two seats and, whether this is used or both hands are on the wheel, the stubby and solid shift lever is perfectly at hand.

The engine of our test coupe surprised us with its willingness to start instantly after two days of standing in the open in cold, wet weather, and with its very quick warmup. At least as praiseworthy was its very good fuel economy, even when driven hard with liberal use of gears and throttle on the highway and in city traffic. Thus flogged it still gave a cheerful 25 mpg, plus.

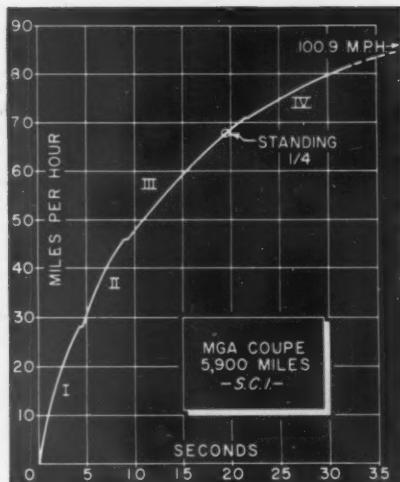
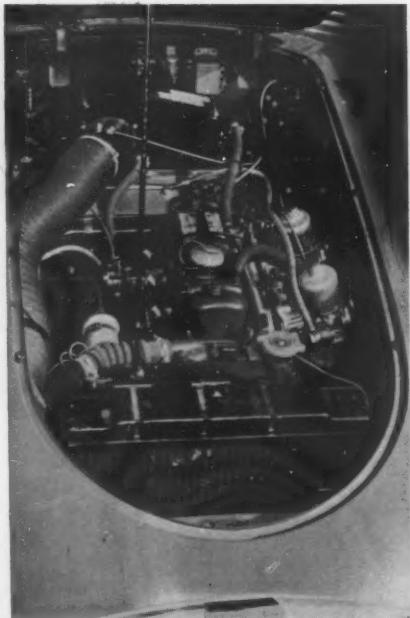
We don't know what was in the fuel tank when we took delivery of the coupe, but its engine would run on for 20 seconds or so after the ignition had been switched off. This also was true of our test roadster, but less so. Running the coupe on 102-octane Shell cured this except for an occasional single kickover. In terms of vibration, there is

no comparison between the power unit of the MGA and its milder sister-engine which propels the Austin A55. The A55's is very smooth and silent. The hotter-cammed, dual carb MGA version is *not* . . . in exchange for which it slams out 39 per cent more horsepower!

The MGA's clutch is stiff but it has a soft, smooth takeup. The flyoff-type hand brake is located on the passenger's side of the shaft tunnel: a socially strategic feature. The instruments are excellent; with nearly the entire world's automotive industry abandoning the ammeter for a warning light we're not about to chide MG for doing the same.

Two anomalies result from the conversion of an originally laid-out right-hand drive car to left-hand drive. In the home-market model the very important combined oil pressure and water temperature gauge is located alongside the tachometer, right in front of the driver—as it should be—and the fuel gauge is in a corresponding position, in front of the passenger, where it need be referred to only occasionally. In the changeover to left-hand drive the speedometer and tach migrate as they should to the new driver's position, but the vital oil-water instrument stays in its original spot, now out of the driver's field of vision. Similarly, the

Though the engine room looks crowded, all service-demanding organs are highly accessible.



Door latch is original, practical and convenient. It operates with a real "feel of quality."



Body has a well-knit look that reflects underlying quality of the car. Wraparound windshield and wide, curved rear window give optimum visibility fore and aft. Only drawback is limited luggage capacity of trunk.



windshield wipers park to the left, out of the right-hand driver's way. In the left-hand (U. S. drive version they still park to the left, just as the hand brake stays in foreign territory. Other objections: at its price the car could afford an ash tray; and, as reported of the roadster, the seat backs should be re-contoured to support the entire back instead of only the shoulders.

So much for negative comment, most of which is fairly trivial and can be corrected by the owner who cares. On the positive side there are many points in addition to those already noted. The MGA's general and detail finish is excellent, actually rich in its appearance. So is its overall look, which wins admiring attention everywhere. It's a car in which the owner can take as much pride of possession as he might in other cars that cost much, much more. It belongs, perfectly, at the swankiest spa and has an urbane, cool distinction that the cherished T-series, with its flavor of flaming youth, never could aspire to. The MGA coupe is the snuggest MG yet, the most comfortable in all kinds of weather and for all kinds of touring. Its necessarily limited luggage accommodation is no problem if you add the natty luggage-rack option. It is a perfect car for rallying and it's ideally adapted to racing. It has the broadest appeal of any MG ever made.

Griff Borgeson



Under adhesion-limit cornering, the MGA rides flat and shows only a slight tendency to drift gently at the rear. The car is fiercely tenacious in its side-bite, giving it awe-inspiring turning characteristics. On the other hand, the ride is a hard one, with small irregularities in the road telegraphed to the driver with a staccato chop. Softer tires are indicated for a smoother ride.

MGA COUPE

PERFORMANCE

TOP SPEED:

Two-way average	101 mph
Fastest one-way run	103 mph

ACCELERATION:

From zero to	Seconds
30 mph	4.8
40 mph	6.9
50 mph	10.7
60 mph	15.4
70 mph	20.8
80 mph	30.3
Standing $\frac{1}{4}$ mile	19.5
Speed at end of quarter	68 mph

SPEED RANGES IN GEARS:

	MPH
I	zero to 28
II	zero to 46
III	5 to 71
IV	9 to top

SPEEDOMETER CORRECTION:

Indicated	Actual
30	30
40	39
50	48
60	58
70	67
80	75

FUEL CONSUMPTION:

Hard driving	20.8 mpg on speed runs
Average driving (under 60 mph)	27 mpg, plus.

BRAKING EFFICIENCY 10 successive emergency stops from 60 mph, just short of locking wheels, registered $\frac{2}{3}g$ on all stops without noticeable increase in pedal pressure.

RATING FACTORS:

Bhp per cu. in.	0.79
Bhp per sq. in. piston area	2.78
Torque (lb-ft) per cu. in.	0.85
Pounds per bhp—test car	29.2
Piston speed @ 60 mph	2007 fpm
Piston speed @ max bhp	3210 fpm
Brake lining area per ton	129 sq in
Mph per 1000 rpm	17.44

SPECIFICATIONS

POWER UNIT:

Type	In-line four
Valve arrangement	Pushrod operated ohv
Bore & Stroke	2.87 x 3.50 in (73.025 x 89.0 mm)
Stroke/Bore Ratio	1.22/1
Displacement	90.88 cu in (1489 cc)
Compression Ratio	8.3/1
Carburetion by	Dual 1.5 in inclined S.U.
Max. Power	72 bhp @ 5500 rpm
Max. Torque	77.4 ft-lbs @ 3500 rpm
Idle Speed	750 rpm

DRIVE TRAIN:

Transmission ratios	I	3.64
	II	2.21
	III	1.37
	IV	1.00
Final drive ratio (test car)	4.30	
Other available final drive ratios	3.70, 4.10, 4.55	
Axle torque taken by	Springs	

CHASSIS:

Wheelbase	94 in
Front Tread	47.4 in
Rear Tread	48.8 in
Suspension, front	Independent, by coil springs and wishbones
Suspension, rear	Semi-elliptic
Shock absorbers	Lever & piston
Steering type	Rack & pinion
Steering wheel turns L to L	2.7
Turning diameter	28 ft.
Brake type	2 leading shoe front, 1 leading, 1 trailing rear
Brake lining area	134.4 sq in
Tire size	5.60 x 15

GENERAL:

Length	156 in
Width	58 in
Height	50 in
Weight, test car	2100 lbs
Weight distribution, F/R	50.5/49.5
Fuel capacity	12 U. S. gallons
Price	\$2695 with disc wheels, \$2785 with wire wheels
Importer	Hambro Automotive Corp. 27 West 57th St. New York 19, N. Y.



BASH OHIO ST

do-it-yourself trials

MGA has completed 90° turn, skids through narrow opening between trees.



by Janet Groene

DO IT YOURSELF has come to bash, down Ohio way, where they've carved a real challenge of a trials out of Austin Davis' north woods in Brookfield. Long a popular sport in England, the bash is little known in this country: the Ohio bash, though mild by British standards, is impossible for many cars, as it retains the original bash concept . . . to see how much your car can take before collapsing.

On a budget of practically nothing, the more sporting members of the Penn-Ohio Sports Car Club in the Youngstown-Warren, Ohio area, began, during the summer of 1951, to play Junior Woodsmen with any equipment they could beg, borrow, or commandeer to drag, plow, mow, and bank a one-mile course through a hay field.

That first course constituted Part One of a long-range program which now includes a 2.1-mile trials course and a road course still under construction by members. Bi-yearly events are held in which drivers forge their way through the dense 162-acre woods, over creeks, and between trees in a five-minute dash against the clock to survival and safety at the end of the course.

British trials entrants often use special cars, and several, including the Dellow, are manufactured just for this purpose. But Penn-Ohio fans drive in competition the vehicle that's going to get Dad to work the next morning and Mom to the grocery store. The rugged course is a great equalizer, and little sedans often beat the times of much more powerful cars.

Using an accumulation of ideas from English trials and their own diabolical stunts, the Terrible Team did their best to see that no car emerges without some small souvenir of the course, even if it be only mud, dust, and straw in the hubcaps. The turns are deceptive and tight, and one turn makes a full 240 degrees. They're banked reverse camber and have flipped more than one cornering fool of a car.

The course was first laid out on paper, then cut through the field using a '47 Ford, which soon became mired to the hubs. A borrowed Jeep was then pressed into service. Total expenditure for the original course was for the rental of a 20-inch rotary mower. The rest of the equipment included six shovels, a machete, the Jeep, hatchets, picks, and volunteered muscles. Fifty trees were removed by pioneer methods.

Best time for the original course was 3:17, held by a

TYLE

Volkswagen, in 4-wheel drift, making 240° Lightbulb turn—a turn so tight, you meet yourself going back.

Aerial photo shows half the course not in woods. Start at "C", enter woods at "A", emerge at "B".

Morris Minor recovers from sharp turn to hurtle 5-foot wide plank bridge. Drums show scars of poor aim.

Special. And the course served as a gymkhana site while scheming minds were at work on something much tougher.

By 1955 they were ready to begin, and a rocky, thickly-forested, mosquito-patrolled woods was waiting. Adding two rented tractors, two dump trucks, and some insect repellent to the original machete and hatchets, the crew began hacking their way through the woods. Incorporating the original course, they ended up with 2.1-miles mostly through the dense woods.

Beginning the course, entrants have it fairly easy for a few feet. In fact, just enough to get up a good head of steam before entering the Sawtooth, a series of 45-degree turns. At one time the Sawtooth had a railroad-tie block which served as a braking test.

Entering the woods, cars cross a rough, 5-foot oil-drum bridge that lies deceptively out of line with the narrow course. Club members recall the 25 tons of dirt required to fill the narrow gap, and shudder at thoughts of missing the drums and pitching into the rocky creek below.

The driver then passes a chicane to Thread the Needle, where he must weave through seven giant trees, the last two only 7-feet apart and just before 90-degree turns.

After Thread the Needle and another series of 90-degree turns, drivers mush through a 75-foot marsh that really warms up to its muddy worst after several cars have blazed the trail. Jutting with roots and nature-planned washboard ruts, the marsh boasts one hard maple that has claimed the course-record Special and a Morris Minor.

The second bridge is a rough wooden platform, with just enough play in the railroad ties and rough wooden planks to threaten another dunk in the rocky creek.

Passing another marsh, the uninitiated usually finds himself with four wheels off the ground after an unexpected, innocent-looking dip. With barely time to recover from flying low over the marshes, he enters the Carousel. After a sharp right turn, cars climb a short but extremely steep incline, topped by a 90-degree turn studded with thick trees and low-hanging limbs.

Coming again into the light of day, drivers face a long straight, ending with a diminishing radius turn into the Light Bulb. In this turn you meet yourself coming back with only a three-foot difference at the narrowest point. Even some of the smallest cars must drift into the tight



Hoods, sidecurtains and warm clothes are the order of day. This course gets real interesting when snow falls.





Average time for the 2.1 mile course is 4:30, with a TR3 holding record 4:09. Admittedly, it wasn't made on snow.

turning radius. Richardson's Round, entered blind, is a deceptive hairpin bordered by an innocent-looking turf banked to slip a car. Then it's into the Waltz, where one turns right, left, right to waltz time, and sweeps around a left bend into the deceleration strip.

In spite of the rugged tour, no serious accidents have been recorded. All cars must have safety belts, all drivers must wear helmets (and goggles in open cars), and no half tonneau covers are permitted. Exacting tech inspections are held for the events, and each driver is required two practice runs. Adding a professional touch and a safety note to the scene are the five field telephones owned by the club. Stations are operated at the start-finish line and at roughest obstacles in the course.

Original financial output in building the course has been less than \$200, and the only yearly expense is the mowing of the paddock and spectator areas. Even trophies are made by club members, and three are given for each event in each class. An entry fee of \$2 per car more than covers club expenses for the events.

The trials is a picnic-type family affair, where the spectators hike into the woods to watch from behind substantial-looking trees. Most fans drive smaller cars, but everything up to Jags run the course. Average time for the 2.1 mile track is four and a half minutes, with a TR-3 holding the record of 4:09.

A one-mile road course is now under construction and every weekend, cloud or shine, finds club members dragging the road with whatever equipment is at hand. For your own club, the bash makes an exciting change from the usual rally-gymkhana activities. In the summer it's a challenge, in the winter it's slush, in the spring and fall it's a muddy mess . . . but it separates the men from the boys. And it's a work-together project at low cost.

Yearly open trials are held at Brookfield and the stout hearted (and stout fendered) are always welcome.

Janet Groene

John Petrone, who holds the course record, gets his Austin A35 back onto road through marshes.



Entering the dense woods, track is narrow and shrubbery so thick that drivers "fly blind" into 90° Sawtooth.





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But once broken in, there is no reason to expect anything but longevity. Cruising speed is up to 60 mph before there is any noticeable wind noise, and you can hold velocity without complaint from the engine. It accelerates well without flat spots, running through the gears to fifty-five, when you have to shift into high gear. Fourth pulls well, and considering the weight, frontal area, and number of cubic inches involved, does a pretty fair job in the power department. Bringing in peak torque at 2000 rpm saves a lot of shifting. You can run as slow as 20 mph in high without luggering — a boon to the wife who really doesn't know what luggering is.

Hillman has provided a hydraulically-actuated clutch that insulates the foot from the engine and lessens the required pressure to compress the springs of the single-disc assembly. The brakes stop positively without swerve, and work very easily. Our brake test — ten successive emergency stops from 50 mph — registered slightly less than $\frac{3}{4}$ g on each stop, which by any standard constitutes good brakes. After the last stop, we had about half of our pedal left, but we could have made many more safe stops. Very little additional pressure was required, and recovery of nearly full pedal was very rapid.

Summing up our experiences with the road test Husky, certainly there are areas for improvement. The biggest one seems to be that most of the information released to the general public talks in such generalities that the purchaser (or borrower, in our case) doesn't know exactly what he is getting, and therefore has to experiment. For example, the chromed rings require a lot of break-in, and a lot of people wonder why a new car uses so much oil. Another thing is the correct pressures in the tires. Over-inflated tires make this normally good-handling car hard to bend off the straight line. The Husky is a good machine, and the discriminating purchaser wants to know how to get the most out of it.

The things we liked about it most were its snappy feeling on the road. You don't get tired driving it, and you can run it up with the sporting machinery, as we did at Lime Rock. As far as handling is concerned, it could be an excellent rally machine. We also tried it out as a station car that drove to the 8:00 in the morning and met the 5:11 in the evening. We saved time and shoe leather by parking close to the platform in spaces that the big boys couldn't dream of fitting into. We took it to parties, where dress, though not formal, was dress — and we were not out of place.

There are two other Huskies where we live. Making our own Galluping poll, we asked each owner how much he would take for his machine. The answers were basically the same.

"Sell my Husky? Sorry, it's not for sale."
Len Griffing

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Official Report #1

SIMCA, the Economy King, outperforms anything in its price class



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ABINGDON



(Continued from page 29)

the competition alive, placing first, second, third, fourth and fifth. This sweeping victory naturally sent the Midget sales curve into a vertical climb, and finally sold MG on the future pursuit of speed honors in every available field—but always, as before, at the customers' expense. Apropos, it should perhaps be reemphasized that before World War II the MG company never participated directly in racing or record breaking. The many celebrities who drove their equipment were customers in the literal sense, though it is probably true that the more successful ones weren't exactly the victims of profiteering at MG's hands. The company pursued this policy consistently until the melancholy day in August of 1935 when Lord Nuffield, who'd been virtually the sole proprietor of MG, sold it as a package to Morris Motors, in which his sway was something less than absolute. Morris wanted no part of racing and records, and many years were to pass before another competitions department was established in a quiet corner of the little plant across from Abingdon's cemetery.

Cecil Kimber, the executive head of MG up to the time of his death, was personally a burning enthusiast for racing. Although big enough to delegate authority to qualified subordinates, he sometimes found it difficult in the heat of races to button his mouth against utterances conflicting with the orders issued by his appointed team controller. The 1931 Double Twelve produced a case in point. At the end of the first twelve hour round (business was spread over two days, with an overnight armistice between them), the Midgets were leading comfortably; so comfortably, in fact, it made him uncomfortable. He therefore adjured Cecil Cousins, the works employee who was controlling the vanguard team of C-types, to make them for Pete's sake take it easy the following day. Cousins, convinced that his schedule made sense as it stood, wriggled out of the quandary by arranging with the drivers that when he hung out GO SLOW signals, this meant keep right on going as you are. He did, they obeyed the code implicitly, and Kimber noted with satisfaction his counsels were being heeded.

1931 was the Midget's *annus mirabilis*. Four weeks after the Double Twelve, C-types finished first and third in the Irish GP at Phoenix Park, Dublin. Less than three months later again, Phoenix history repeated itself exactly at the Ards circuit, Northern Ireland, where C's placed first and third in Britain's *grande épreuve*, the TT. These races were of course run on handicap, and by a coincidence the two top Midgets were separated by a blown

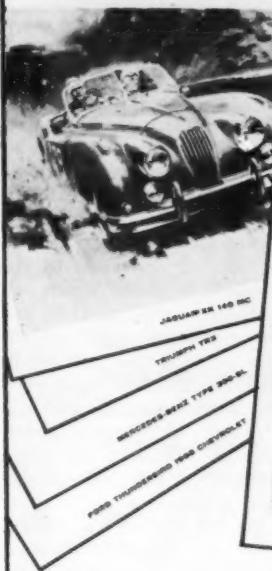
(Continued on page 50)

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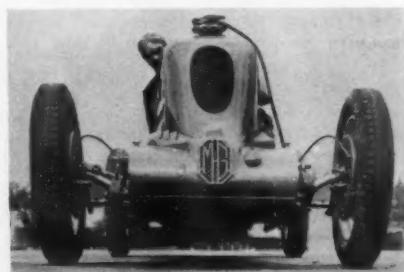
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ABINGDON
(Continued from page 48)

Alfa Romeo at Dublin and Ards both. After the Irish GP and before the TT, Powerplus blowers, rotating at 68 percent of engine speed, were grafted onto the Midgets, hung between the dumbirons and driven through internally cut reduction gears. The C engine had been designed with a switch to blowers in mind, and the supercharging experience already gained with EX120 proved valuable when the makeover was tackled.

The C-type MG, a derivative of the slow but serviceable M model which had founded the Midget strain in 1929 and was to stay in production until mid-32, was one of the prettiest cars ever to be hung with octagons. Establishing a practice that would become an Abingdon tradition, it had a twin, the D-type, of generally similar design but with an extra 100 cc under the hood and without specific competition pretensions.

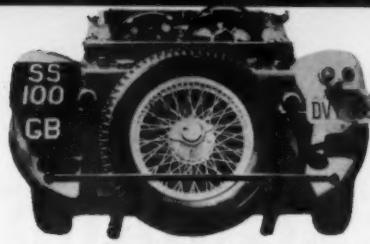
In 1932 the Double Twelve was ditched and replaced by an integral 1000 miler at Brooklands. In marathons like these, Midgets and midget-sizers generally enjoyed an incidental advantage insofar as their lightness and accessibility lent themselves to trackside renovations on a scale that the weightier competition couldn't even contemplate. By this token, a pit operation perhaps without precedent was undertaken by MG during the '32 Thousand Miles. Hugh Hamilton, who SCI readers met in Russ Kelly's *This was Nuvolari* last June, severely loused up the bottom end of his C-type's engine while the race was yet young. Diagnosing that no repair job was practicable, the pit manager decided to switch a complete engine out of a practice car on the sidelines. It wasn't surprising that the equipo hadn't provided itself with a crane for such a purpose, but they weren't going to be beaten for the lack of a make-do dodge. Cousins, nearly six and a half feet tall and



What passed for the narrowest car in the world, in '35—a super-streamlined MG Midget, built around Miss Doreen Evans, who raced it at opening meet.

strong to boot, was shunted into position, a rope was passed under the damaged engine and over Cousins' arched neck, two men heaved on the end of the line, and the mill was out. When all was set to implace the substitute, Cousins stiffened his spine and played cranes all over again. Hamilton got back into the act, finished the race and enabled Goldie Gardner's C-Midget trio to win the team prize.

(Continued on page 64)



READERS' SURVEY...

It is now two years, give or take a month, since SCI came under its current management. In that time we've come a long way. Our readership has tripled and SCI is sold all over the world, wherever there are people who believe an automobile can be something more than a mere tool for carting the human form from point to point. This is truly gratifying, believe us. But no magazine, especially one devoted to a specialized field, is faultless. There is always room for improvement and

to that end is the following set of questions. Have we been doing too much or too little on one or another subject? Only our readers can tell us the answer to this. You don't even have to sign the questionnaire if you don't feel like it. Just fill it out and send it to the The Editors, Sports Cars Illustrated, One Park Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. If you don't feel like tearing out the page, please feel free to make a copy. Either way, let's hear how you feel about things.

1. Following is a list of subjects covered in each issue of this magazine. Please check to indicate whether you would like to see more coverage, about the same, or less coverage, of each one listed.

	More	Same	Less
Road Tests	—	—	—
Sports Cars Personalities	—	—	—
Humor	—	—	—
Technical Reports	—	—	—
Cut-Away Diagrams	—	—	—

	More	Same	Less
Classic Cars	—	—	—
Conversion	—	—	—
Competitions	—	—	—
Letters (from readers)	—	—	—
Technical Notes	—	—	—
How-To	—	—	—

2. Which of the articles in this issue did you like best; which did you like least? Please list below.

Liked Best

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Liked Least

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Do you keep your issues of SCI for reference?

YES _____ NO _____

4. In addition to yourself, how many other persons read your copy of SCI? 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 or more _____ NONE _____

5. Do you read any other automotive magazines?

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Read Regularly

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6. What cars do you own?

Sports	Type	Touring
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Make

Year

7.a. Have any parts of the car(s) you now own been replaced or modified? YES _____ NO _____
 b. (IF YES) Please check below which parts were replaced or modified.

Replaced	Modified	Replaced	Modified
Manifold	_____	Crankshaft	_____
Head	_____	Complete engine	_____
Camshaft	_____	Gears or gearboxes	_____
Pistons	_____	Supercharger	_____
Rings and bearings	_____	Other (Please list) _____	_____

c. In the past 12 months about how much have you spent on the replacement or modification of any parts of your present car(s)? \$ _____

8.a. Have you added any extras in accessories or equipment to your present car(s)? YES _____ NO _____
 b. (IF YES) What have you added and about how much have you spent for extras on your present car(s)?

Added _____ Amount Spent \$ _____

9. a. Have you participated in any racing in the past 12 months? YES _____ NO _____
 b. (IF YES) In what capacity? _____

10. Have you participated in any rallies within the past 12 months? YES _____ NO _____

11. Have you attended any races in the past 12 months? YES _____ NO _____

12. Approximately how many miles have you personally driven in the past 12 months? _____ miles

13. Are you now a member of any automobile club or organization? YES _____ NO _____

14. Are you . . . Male _____ Female _____ 15. How old are you? _____ Years

16. What is your occupation (please include title or position) _____

17. What was the highest grade of school you completed? Elementary School _____ High School _____ College _____ Other _____



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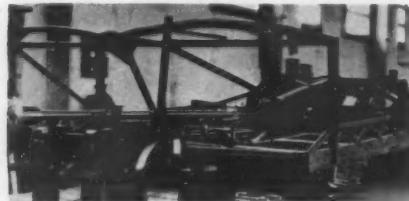
EUROPE

By Jesse L. Alexander

Geneva,

The 1958 competition scene is clearer now than it was back in mid-winter when we made our pre-season forecast. The biggest news comes out of Maranello, where Ferrari engineers are putting the final touches to a 2.5 liter V-6 sports car. The power plant is, of course, directly descended from their new Formula I and II "Dino" V-6 that appeared last year both in 1.5 liter and 2 liter form. For 1958, Enzo Ferrari and his engineers have developed a new tubular sports car chassis to take the remarkably potent V-6. It sits dead center with the drive running via a 250 Europa gear box to a live rear axle. No other details are available at present but if current tests prove satisfactory, look for this new sports version of the "Dino" to make a debut either at the 1000 km race on the Nürburgring or at Le Mans.

Further changes have been made to the Formula I V-6. Peter Collins has been testing the latest model with a lighter, more rigid chassis at Monza. Several cars have now been built and Ferrari will make the Grand Prix of Monaco at Monte Carlo his first big attempt at regaining ground lost in Formula racing during 1957.



Latest type frame for Ferrari 250 GT

The situation at Maserati looks considerably better than it did 5 months ago. Fangio will enter into an agreement to "hire" the latest version of the 250F Formula car which is ready now. Lighter, and with engine mods to allow the car to run on aviation fuel, the new six cylinder will be at Monte Carlo driven by Fangio. Ugolini and Guerino Bertocchi will, of course, be backing Fangio to the hilt in addition to assisting private owners of 250F Maseratis.

From England comes word that Vanwall are more than pleased with tests carried out through the winter on their car to get it running satisfactorily on aviation gas. Lewis-Evans and Tony Brooks have both been driving the car at Silverstone and were able to set up times that closely equalled previous lap records when using special fuel. No major changes other than engine development are expected on the Vanwall for 1958.

Word is that there has been no appreciable horsepower drop from the power plant.

BRM have a new chassis. It is considerably lighter than last year's and in addition, suspension mods prescribed by Colin Chapman have been carried out over the winter. With both Jean Behra and Harry Schell signed on to the BRM equipo in '58, we may just see the Owen Racing Organization do something this year.

Aston-Martin definitely have a single-seater Formula I car running on test. At present the word is that the car may appear towards the end of the year after further trials are carried out this summer. It is a 2.5 liter derivation of the DBR1 3-liter power plant, but with a monoposto chassis. As in any racing car running in Formula racing, weight is one of the prime considerations, and Aston is trying now to cut pounds away from their design. Shortage of drivers will also hamper David Brown's entry into Formula I racing, unless he manages to sign up Moss at the last minute. At this writing, Stirling has still not signed with Vanwall, although he will drive Aston-Martins in international sports car competitions.

The Cooper success at Buenos Aires has given real impetus to the efforts of John Cooper. With Rob Walker running his own Cooper Climax and several works Coopers on the starting line—perhaps with Moss behind the wheel of one—Formula racing is going to get a real shot in the arm in '58. Colin Chapman's team of Formula I Lotus is gradually taking shape and the first race for them will be Monte Carlo.

Sticking to Chapman for a moment, progress of the "Elite" coupe first seen last year at Earls Court is moving ahead, but not as fast as the countless prospective buyers of the car would like. Vibration tests have been carried out at DeHavilland Aircraft Company on jigs to sort out any difficulties that might crop up with the new epoxy resin bodies. Production of the "Elite" should get under way presently, with the first demonstrators being delivered while you read this. Chapman has had a car on the road in England and is apparently pleased with preliminary results. Be patient!

The Geneva show has come and gone without being a really inspiring event as such. Only one or two shows every year rate coverage. Frankfurt, the German auto exposition held every two years, is always the most significant. Most manufacturers hold back new cars expressly

for introduction at Frankfurt. Turin is always interesting from the coachwork and styling standpoint. We actually saw one of the Ghia Imperial limousines on the road the other day here in Geneva. If you think a Lincoln is long, wait until you see the Ghia in real life.

Pinin Farina has designed a compact and attractive body for the Fiat 1200 Gran Lucé, and the car will be distributed by Hoffman in New York.

Alfa-Romeo hope to get their "Sprint Spéciale" into production by early summer. The body maker and stylist, Bertone, has improved the exterior trim slightly, as well as providing more interior head room. The machine is very light-designed directly for competition—and will



be seen first in Gran Turismo racing on the Continent.

As far as this correspondent is concerned, the highlight of the Geneva show was being allowed to drive the Maserati 3.5 Gran Turismo in the morning and in the afternoon of the same day, have a run in the latest Ferrari 250 Europa GT coupe. First impressions are often misleading and no great conclusions can be drawn at present, but 15 minutes behind the wheel of the Maser and a bit longer time driving the Ferrari make for interesting comparisons. First, the Ferrari we drove was as smooth and quiet at low speed as an American car. Poking along at 1000 rpm in top gear at 35 mph in traffic made one think he was in a General Motors product. But one flick to the gas and a pop into second and you're in for a real surprise. The car moves out from underneath you. I have never driven such a thrillingly responsive machine as the Ferrari. The valve train noise, the feel of the rugged yet silent and silk smooth gear box, close pedal placement, the low seating position with your feet almost directly out in front of you, and the seemingly huge rev counter placed almost directly behind the steering wheel are features and impressions that must mold one's opinions. Steering is light, and

the Ferrari is as maneuverable as an MG. It possesses a solid-comfortable competition ride that directly contrasts with the road feel of the Maserati GT. Maser's have obviously attempted to construct a docile, softly-sprung high-speed touring coupe, rather than produce in series production a spirited near full-race Gran Turismo competitor, which is what the Ferrari is.

The Maserati is a success for what it is meant to be, but whether it will stand up under daily road use is something that has yet to be determined. There is considerably more room in the Maserati for luggage and an occasional passenger, while the Ferrari is severely limited, particularly so in the new, open "California" model. Acceleration "feel" on the Maserati is not quite so violent as the Ferrari, but the Maser does not "hang about" as the British so aptly put it. The centrally-mounted gear lever is excellently positioned, as in the Ferrari. The Maser's rev counter is hidden by a steering wheel spoke—one feature we didn't particularly like. A certain amount of road and wheel movement was transmitted through the steering of the Maserati, while the Ferrari possesses dead-smooth direction.

Brakes on both are extremely potent. The Maser has a servo fitted as standard, while the Ferrari has a mechanical servo



(Baldwin system) installed onto the front shoes to give more braking action there than on the rear. Stopping the Ferrari required a bit more effort on the driver's part, but in every case the car was stopped smoothly and without noise or smell.

Here, then, are two quite special, high-performance Italian Gran Turismo coupes, and each, in its own right, is bound to make a name for itself.

A talk with Uhlenhaut at Geneva confirmed the current rumors that there is nothing to be expected from Mercedes at least this year. Public opinion against motor racing is cited as one reason, the lack of a really interesting formula—and finally the fact "that they have too much else to do"—are all factors involved. Karl Kling denied any rumors that an improved version of the 190 SL is imminent.

The Austin-Healey "Sp rite" was not shown at Geneva, the makers holding back for the New York showing. Porsche intend to build a single seater RSK for limited participation in Formula II racing this summer. The "jet cooling" is perfected upto a point, but the word is that it is not yet ready for use in a long distance sports car event. A crack at the European Hill Climb championship perhaps?

Jesse Alexander

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PROFESSIONALISM

John Fitch

(Continued from page 17)

same classes and regulations as in the past. The purposes of amateurism and the SCCA are thus served. Now, for the event to attract a solid public following, we have the "open" race with about twenty first-class cars and drivers, all capable of winning. In addition to the ones we know, such as Hill, Shelby and Hansgen and Ferrari, Maserati and Jaguar, soon there would be capable American cars (the Troutman-Barnes special, for example, and Reventlow's RA, now being prepared) as well as ready-made names from the "outside" world of racing which does not concern itself with the restrictions of amateurism. Fangio, Moss, Collins and Hawthorn, among others, can be expected to grace our circuits when our events achieve some public status and financial ability, but not before.

Amateurs would be allowed to race in the open event and remain amateurs, provided they declared themselves beforehand as being ineligible for prizes, as at Sebring. However, they could at any time become "professional" after which they would not be allowed to race against amateurs. Thus the amateurs would be "protected"; the pros could not invade their province but those amateurs who qualified could run against the pros.

An ancillary benefit to amateur racing would be that those alleged *sub rosa* professionals about whom we hear so much (but about which nothing is done) would leave the amateur events to the "real" amateurs. The expense of fielding an effectively competitive car by the amateur should then be reduced and the SCCA might see fit to eliminate or reduce the entry fee. In any case, the SCCA exclusively would continue to regulate amateur racing and should find its task an easier one.

However, we realize the SCCA is not likely to embrace such a program with any enthusiasm. This is unfortunate because the probability is that such "open" events will soon be held independently, if not with the SCCA, at the expense of the popularity of SCCA events.

This is not a dark plot, but a recognition of the several strong pressures for open racing which now exist in opposition to the restrictions of amateurism, whether we like them or not. Oddly enough, a group of private circuit owners, who would not ordinarily be expected to seek ways to spend even more money, are the most active proponents of open racing.

By their nature the open races will be practically "class-less" with the emphasis on overall positions. Therefore most of the under two liter modified cars, conceded to be easier to drive, would remain amateur and the faster modified cars, which, with notable exceptions, are usually over two liters, would be driven by "experts" of professional or near-professional ability, regardless of any "declarations." Modern sports racing cars being the juggernauts they are, they should be driven only by comparative experts, as we all know.

Thus with a few exceptions which would be the easier to manage, the SCCA would be relieved of an awkward position: that

(Continued on page 56)

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PROFESSIONALISM

M. R. J. Wyllie

(Continued from page 17)

I beg to differ.

The number of SCCA drivers who believe that professional sports car racing would significantly benefit them is, perhaps, twenty five. To these gentlemen I say: follow your beliefs. If you think that your driving abilities and crowd-appeal are so surpassingly significant, hire Elkhart Lake, Lime Rock, Riverside, Marlboro, VIR, etc. and run professional sports car races. Accept starting money, prize money, sign contracts with manufacturers and go and get rich — if you can. And, if you cannot, after one year (Rule 6) the SCCA may reaccept you in its amateur races.

I hate to say this, but I doubt whether you have the guts to cut your umbilical cord to the SCCA. Perhaps I should say that you have the sense not to. What you really want is to have your cake and to eat it too. You want to get paid to race at SCCA events but you also want a less privileged class of SCCA member to turn out at his own expense as a sort of Greek chorus supporting your stellar role. You also want, presumably, all the unpaid and dedicated men who presently come to run the race, patrol the pits, man the flag-stations, etc. to continue to do so. Have you ever thought that these individuals might also appreciate a little recompense?

I have seen it mooted that financial help be limited to a starting fee of \$100 — and that, to maintain a semblance of "amateurism", this fee be given to all starters. Do you realise that at the Cumberland National Races in 1957 such a starting fee would alone have involved an expenditure of over \$20,000? And that the total profit realised by this highly successful race run as a charitable venture by a dedicated Lions Club and the Steel Cities Region of the SCCA was almost precisely \$20,000?

The conclusion here is clear and I take no credit for drawing it — Charles Moran, an ex-President of the SCCA reached the same conclusion in 1955. Once you permit starting money to be awarded your paid entries become limited to those whom the promoters believe to be the greatest drawing cards. It is not a question of ethics or morals or good intentions but merely the most elementary economics. No promoter can offer to pay starting money uniformly to an unlimited field of entrants. And if starting money must be paid, the starting field will be limited — and bang goes the most cherished right of all holders of SCCA competition licenses.

The reply to this argument is, presumably, that starting money need not be paid to all entrants but only to those whom the promoter feels to have crowd-appeal. So the rich get richer and the poor, in a manner of speaking, get poorer. Much poorer in fact. Without quoting names or pointing fingers I can say that when this issue was raised with the promoter of one well-known commercial race-course his reply was roughly as follows. "If I have to pay starting money to some big-name drivers I shall get the money by raising the general entry fee to \$50 or \$100."

At this juncture I would like to intro-

(Continued on page 57)



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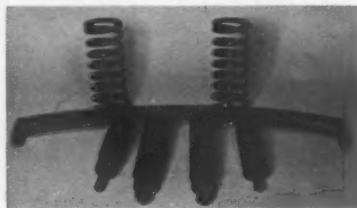
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PROFESSIONALISM

John Fitch

(Continued from page 54)

of being obliged to permit any driver to suddenly step into the hottest machinery made, by virtue of a full competition license earned in a stock MG. This is a difficult problem. The evaluation of driver ability in this realm may always remain beyond the ability of committees accredited by a conscientiously amateur group. More important, the SCCA would be relieved of an untenable position; that of condoning or politely ignoring apparent professionalism in a sport that professes to be amateur, by which it flouts its own regulations, its intent and a seemingly fundamental obligation to its members.

Of course, professionalism in itself is not "wrong" or every producing person would be wrong. Professionalism is wrong only if it exists in an activity that professes to be amateur.

You, reader, must think it is a good sport or you would not have read this far; unfortunately it is also expensive. But let us pay for it as we can so long as we can have it, and only concern ourselves with money when there is not enough to accomplish good purposes.

To those who predict the SCCA will not be willing to accept lesser role (in a technical sense), we reluctantly concede the possibility, but trust that an organization dedicated to the welfare of a sport will not seek to perpetuate its own name by denying full stature to that sport, especially when it chooses to represent only a limited segment of it.

It will be unfortunate indeed if the SCCA does not go along with the times, for it serves many important functions. Aside from the organization of events of every kind, it has attracted able people over the last ten years who capably dispatch duties of licensing, flagging, communications, etc. Its most important achievement is taken for granted; with minor exceptions it has maintained uniform national rules and order in a sport rather disposed to disorder, if we are to judge by the experience of other U.S. racing organizations. The possibility of road racing breaking up into regional racing organizations with conflicting regulations and the "outlaw" system of controlling respective members, is the risk that is run if the SCCA does not condone, or indeed encourage, open racing.

Assuming the open events, (of which about twelve nationally would keep the twenty or thirty crews involved busy enough) attract the "names" now racing with the SCCA and the SCCA does not allow the open events to co-exist, then the SCCA will lose the public following these "names" attracted to their events. Needless to say the revenue the public following represents will also be lost to the SCCA. Can the SCCA maintain the dominant place it deserves without successful racing? Personally, we hope we never have the occasion to find out.

There are those in the SCCA who deprecate racing and that is certainly their privilege, but recognizing the dependence of good circuits upon successful racing, are they not neglecting the wishes of the many members who emphatically do want to race?

(Continued on page 58)

PROFESSIONALISM

M. R. J. Wyllie

(Continued from page 55)

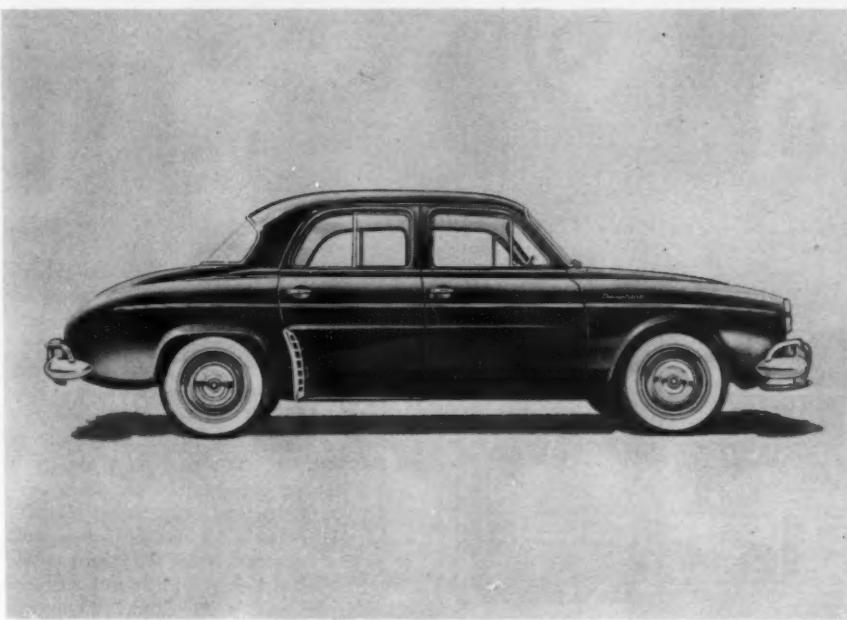
duce some personal views. The first is that in spite of its popularity sports car racing in the U.S.A. has nothing like the mass-appeal necessary to support any measure of professionalism. I believe this to be true because of the innate and entirely natural chauvinism of the great American public. Because of the attitude of Detroit towards racing, sports cars in this country are foreign cars. This condition is likely to continue. I doubt very seriously the *mass* appeal of racing in foreign cars in a country as highly nationalistic as the U.S.A.

The second is the ignorance displayed by present sports car crowds with regard to the niceties of sports car racing. In my view they could not care less whether the so-called big-names are or are not participating. All the majority of spectators care about is to see the cars run and, if possible, to witness accidents. Who wins and how he wins is secondary. There is not one scintilla of evidence to support the view that the participation of the present big-name drivers affects significantly the size of a crowd. If the big-name drivers were all to retire tomorrow because they could no longer afford to race the sport would be entirely unaffected; overnight a new set of winners would emerge. The degree of competence of the newcomers would be quite immaterial. It is a salutary thought that the retirement of Phil Walters (in my view, the greatest U.S. sports car driver to date) and Bill Spear, to name but two, did not even ripple the attendance pool.

Never forget that all the big-name drivers who may today drive other people's expensive cars started in the sport by driving their own cars. With negligible exceptions these individuals are no less prosperous now than they were two or three years ago. If they could then afford the stock Jaguars or MGs in which they achieved their first measure of fame, they can certainly afford now to attend races at their own expense. These drivers, when queried, stoutly maintain that they drive "only for the fun of it, but—". In that "but" lies their trouble. They have become acclimated to driving cars more expensive than their means permit, to attending more National events throughout the country than their finances will stand. They are reluctant to draw in their horns, to revert to the conditions they can honestly afford. Entirely naturally they cling passionately to their present prerogatives and, indeed, wish to race more frequently still in yet swifter cars—and the devil take the hindmost. I sympathise with them. I understand their ambitions and their problems. I appreciate that some form of professionalism seems to offer them the best of both worlds. I too would like means to expand my racing activities. Racing is a bug, one that I have myself. But until a majority of the 1800 competition license holders of the SCCA in a free and informed vote out for professionalism I must say firmly and honestly: Professionalism in the SCCA? No! It would sound the death-knell of sports car racing in the United States as we know it today. And what we know today as SCCA racing is still the envy of the automotive world.

—M. R. J. Wyllie

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PROFESSIONALISM

John Fitch

(Continued from page 56)

Despite any specific charter statements in the SCCA constitution, good road racing is a primary interest of sports car enthusiasts. Sebring is the high point of U.S. road racing while the world's other major races are much discussed and closely followed. Only distance and inaccessibility tempers the interest they generate.

What are the most popular films at club meetings? Races, of course, and the bigger, the closer and the harder they are fought the more popular they are.

Re the professional aspects of these races, did you ever hear anyone say Sebring or Le Mans was not interesting or was in any way inferior to an American amateur event because Sebring and Le Mans are "professional?" On the contrary, the enthusiasts' only concern is how to enter these races or at least to see them.

At Le Mans or Monza the subject of professionalism never occurs to anyone. It is known that certain drivers are with teams who presumably pay for their services, but a competent independent (French for amateur) in a fast car is just as well or as badly thought of, as the case may be. Whether he is being paid or not, no one cares — "the sport's the thing." Financial considerations are regarded, as in other sports, as a regrettable if unavoidable nuisance, no more, no less. How can this be doubted when it is apparent that with a rare exception or two only a handful of people can manage even a precarious living from racing? What is more convincing is that the nature of racing is such that no conceivable prize could induce anyone to race if he didn't like it.

To the charge that the bait of money prizes will bring dangerous, cut-throat driving and dirty tactics, we can reply from first-hand knowledge that drivers are the same whether the prize is a cup or a purse. American track drivers like Pat O'Connor and the late Bob Sveikert who have entered road races have driven not one bit differently — they, the Europeans and the American "amateurs" drive one way — to win. Does anyone really imagine that Phil Hill drives less intensely at Elkhart Lake than in Messina? To those who have a passing acquaintance with the facts, the question is pointless. The fact that road racing is a singularly demanding sport with an automatic discipline based on physics is the guarantee that it will always be conducted as a sport.

Freedom is a big idea and one that works pretty well in the long run, no matter what the subject. Unfortunately the amateur rule in American road racing reserves the sport to a small minority — it is exclusive to a degree that becomes unwholesome.

It is in fact, a cumbersome, artificial restriction of not only the sport, but sports car development and driver opportunity which has outlived its former usefulness. To crown its self-condemnation, it does not work, as the proponents of amateurism themselves readily admit. It's time for a new look at an old sport.

John Fitch

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FLAT

(Continued from page 23)

lent argument in favor of unit body-frame construction, properly practiced. It's a very secure, competent feeling car. It is not so much responsive as it is reliably obedient to the driver's almost effortless motions. It accepts hard flogging with no trace of protest.

This is a relaxing car to drive thanks to the lightness of its controls. Added to this there is the soporific effect of a strong drone that emanates from engine and drive line, starting at about 45 mph. Some of this may be due to drive-shaft whip: the standard 1100 has a one-piece shaft while its faster, higher-revving counterpart, the 1100 TV (*touring veloce* or fast touring) uses a two-piece shaft with central steady bearing.

Our test machine had been driven to Los Angeles from New York and its odometer showed almost 5,000 miles at the end of our sojourn with it. It was well broken in and if squeaks, rattles and bugs were likely to develop, they should have begun. There were none. The shift linkage certainly had been worked fully free of any original stiffness, but big reductions in required shifting effort still can be made in this car. The synchromesh on its top three gears proved to be infallible in spite of the most quickly forced gear changes both up and down. The indirect ratios are well spaced for speeds up to 50 mph, the top limit of Third gear; they are well-spaced in terms of traffic and mountain driving conditions. But for the open road, for passing and for downshifting on entering turns or descending grades, a lower numerical ratio would be desirable for Third.

The problem of reducing speed to the point where Third can be engaged without danger of over-revving is minimized by the Millecento's brakes. It's hard to conceive of a car that is over-braked but if one ever was, this is it. Previous 1100's had 102 square inches of brake lining area and beautiful, radially-finned light alloy drums. These were absolutely outstanding brakes but with Alps, Appenines and Abruzzi in mind, not to mention Italian city traffic, Fiat decided they were not good enough. Lining area for the '58 1100 has been jumped to 149 square inches — nearly a 50 per cent increase — and the wider light-alloy drums now have transverse fins, *à la* Mercedes-Benz. Their susceptibility to fade is absurdly minute. The pedal pressure required to produce sudden stops is on a par with sensitive power brakes. They simply are magnificent and still would be exceptional on a much heavier car. Along with the Millecento's steering, suspension and handling its brakes give it more than a little of the character of a competition car. Special builders take note.

The 1100 does not boast a high top speed nor is it a brilliant machine in terms of acceleration. It could have been designed for that type of service but that would not be compatible with its reason for being which is to provide highly economical family-type transportation. Its go-factor is good enough to permit an aggressive driver to hold his own nicely in thrusty traffic. You won't beat a Detroit

(Continued from page 60)



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FIAT

(Continued from page 59)

dinosaur to the next traffic signal, but you'll be there before the light turns green. Pulling power in Fourth gear is pretty gentle above 50 mph, requiring lots of space for passing at normal highway cruising speeds. The owner's manual is wisely emphatic about not luggering the engine in top gear and not driving at full throttle for very long periods of time. At its top speed the 1100 feels every bit as steady as at low speeds and in the course of much full-bore driving in stormy weather the car was never disturbed by cross winds.

What you get from the 1100 that the dinosaur owner does not is terrific fuel economy, among many other things. During our acceleration and high speed runs we averaged 21.4 mpg on regular fuel, and that translates as flat-out performance at all times and the worst gas mileage you could get if you tried. Under more normal, but still tough, driving conditions of mixed freeway storming and traffic tromping we fell right into the 31 mpg range, indicating that 40 mpg can be easily attained with easy driving.

The engine that has this modest appetite is a classic in the sense that the flat-head Ford and Chev 6 are classics. It has been steadily developed and refined for over two decades and has powered some very famous small-displacement race cars with outputs in the 90 bhp range. But in the basic 1100 it is set up to give long and faithful service rather than fireworks, and in its '58 specification puts out a respectable 43 bhp. Improvements for '58 are a new light-alloy head with four intake ports instead of the previous two, plus a new water-jacketed intake manifold in light alloy. The strictly-for-import single-throat downdraft Weber carb now incorporates an accelerator pump, but retains a much appreciated hand throttle control. Weight of the power train also is kept down by use of light alloy for the transmission housing. The little engine starts promptly and willingly in cold, damp weather, runs with very acceptable smoothness and only begins to sound hard-working as it approaches its 4800-rpm power peak, beyond which it sounds tightly wound indeed.

The port of entry base price of the 1100 is \$1719, plus \$25 for whitewall tires (hardly *de rigueur* on an economy car) and \$35 for leatherette upholstery (a large cash difference between cloth and the more washable, durable and desirable fabric). Few 1100's, if any, are arriving without these options, so the base price that most purchasers will pay is \$1779 . . . still a good one. This amount includes all the other niceties which are lavished on the Millecenti built for export to the U.S.A. These include the special Weber carburetor, locking fuel tank cap, very good heater, windshield washer, special quality synchromesh transmission, two-position anti-glare rear view mirror, and hand straps above the rear windows for the convenience of rear seat passengers. The workmanship on our test car and other 1100's we inspected was of high quality.

The 1100 carries four persons of average size in excellent comfort and the roomy trunk benefits from storage of the spare tire and wheel in a recess beneath the trunk's floor. Driver vision is very good in all directions, including the view of the road immediately in front of the car. Instruments consist of a tape or linear-scale speedometer without trip odometer, and a fuel gauge. Lights are provided within the hooded instrument cluster to indicate oil pressure, generator operation, low fuel level and lighting of parking lights. Outside the cluster there are lights to indicate high-beam headlight position and turn-signal action. The brightness of these lights can be regulated by rotating their clear plastic covers, but light intensity within the instrument cluster is fixed at a low level. In spite of skillful tailoring of the new 1100 to appeal to American tastes (for example, the '58 has its starter switch in combination with the ignition lock, in place of the former pull-type switch) the instrument panel still is sprinkled with unlabelled toggle switches in typically Italian style. Until their identities can be memorized mistakes are sure to be made.

As the imported light car boom has gathered momentum in the United States the aloofness of Fiat, one of the world's pioneer builders of "people's cars," from this market has been notable. There have been two major reasons for Fiat's late arrival on the scene: a long-lived seller's market in postwar Italy and a major overseas manufacturer's need to find a distributor in the U.S. with exceptional experience in this specialized merchandising field. In time, the seller's market dwindled and Fiat and M. E. Hoffman connected. Hoffman had pioneered the American beachheads of VW, Porsche, Jaguar, Mercedes-Benz and Alfa Romeo. It was a big-time combination.

Fiat produces four automobiles, each identified by its metric piston displacement: the 600, 1100, 1400 and 1900. Of these the Milcento is Italy's best-selling car at home and abroad. In fuel economy and brakes it is a standout and in the areas of ride, handling, comfort, room, appearance and quality of design and workmanship it is at the very least a match for all its competition. Its price is modest and the organization behind it is strong and responsible. The all-important question of parts and service seems to have been nicely resolved. Fiat evidently has arrived as a major force in the American light-car scene.

Griff Borgeson

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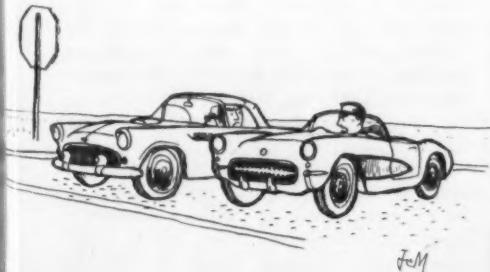
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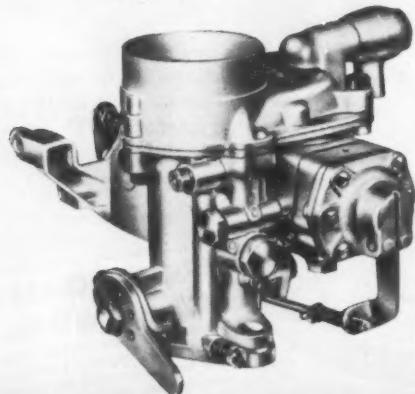
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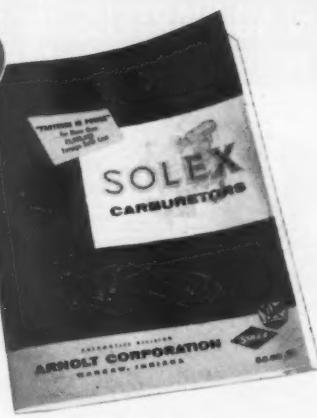
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REVENTLOW

(Continued from page 37)

sures, which further reduces the effective overall spring rate of the suspension complex. The car currently runs Firestone's newest Super Sports tires, which have a softer tread compound than previous versions, with 26 psi at the front and 24 psi at the rear.

The brakes, including the inboard rear brakes, are stock Mercury components, adapted by Conze Engineering, who also executed the rear axle-and-hub machine work. Performance with these brakes has been good to date but they very naturally hold heat. RAI now are fabricating special brakes of their own design. The drums' internal dimensions are four by eleven inches and bonded to them are huge light alloy muffs with deep transverse fins. A pair of Girling master cylinders serves the front and rear brakes independently. Steering is by rack and pinion . . . robbed from a Morris Minor and suitably modified.

The frame on which all this is hung is a tubular truss structure made of 4130 chrome-moly steel throughout. The main tubes are 1 1/4 inch and the trusses are one inch in diameter and the wall thickness of both sizes is .065 inch. Although the frame is extremely light designer Barnes says, "Because of the type of material we use we think our car is considerably stronger than anything our competition is running. We think it will finish on a rough course where the competition won't." Those who drove it at Phoenix agree that the Scarab's performance on the rough portion of the course was unprecedently good. Where the surface is smooth it rides like a passenger car.

The engine is a Chev V8 with four inch bore and standard three inch stroke, giving a displacement of 301.6 cubic inches or 4941 cc. Nothing radical has been done to the power plant. On the contrary, it has received a thorough but conservative and typical hop-up treatment. Combustion chambers and ports have been cleaned up, 1 1/8 exhaust and 1 15/16 intake valves, with dual springs, have been installed. The water pump and the Joe Hunt Scintilla magneto are gear driven; belt drives have been eliminated. The Engle cam's timing emphasizes flatness and breadth in the power and torque curves. The light alloy flywheel weighs ten pounds and the single-plate clutch uses a light alloy pressure plate with 2200 pounds' push behind it.

Carburetion is by Hilborn fuel injection, using Hilborn's new aerated nozzles. With these nicely adjusted, Daigh says, the engine will idle at 600 rpm—although he normally sets it for 1000—and the injectors function as smoothly as carbs. The engine will turn 7500 rpm without strain but, in the car, Daigh chooses to red-line it at 7000.

The first engine was simply put together and run and the 302 bhp quoted for it is an estimate based on outputs commonly observed in carbureted Chevs. But, in addition to the injectors, Daigh is running intake ram tubes (seven inches from tip to valve) and these should make for a large gain in peak output. A second engine now is being readied for dynamometer

test and accurate figures will be available soon. But what it does on a race course and how long it does it is what concerns RAI most at this moment. "We're after a good power curve rather than max hp," says Daigh. "You've got to get off the corners; that's where most the racing is done."

Since the FIA three-liter limit was announced RAI have done considerable development work on the 180 cubic inch Meyer & Drake Offy. Reventlow says, "We know that they've been tried before and that nobody's ever been successful with them. But they're a little more modern now and we're pulling as much horsepower as any other three-liter that's running. And we think there's still room for further improvement. We'll drop the Offy in at a later date, when we want to compete in that class. Right now we'll concentrate on the Chev."

The Offy is a heavy engine, perhaps a couple of hundred pounds heavier than a comparable Italian thoroughbred. I asked the RAI crew if they were out to build an all-American competition sports car and got the answer, "Oh, not necessarily." I then asked if they would consider using any engine other than the Offy and was reminded that there's no other three-liter available in the U. S. "Then you're determined to stick with American engines?" I asked. "Right," was the answer. "All we can hope to do in the three-liter class is out-horsepower the competition."

Rumor has had it that the new Reventlow machine is going into series production. This is groundless at the moment but it's entirely possible. In the first place, Olson says of the existing car, "We built this machine out of thin air. It's completely experimental; it's a test car, scarcely a prototype. It's a car that we won't build again. We've learned an awful lot in the course of developing it and we've changed it I don't know how many times. Every time we take it out we learn something new. Now we're going to build two more cars and they'll incorporate all we've learned from *Scarab I*. They'll be different and they'll be better.

"As for building these cars in quantities, we can't say anything right now. It's far from being simply up to us. First there has to be a demand. But I imagine that if people want to buy them—if the cars are that good—that we'll build them."

Bill Pollack, prominent driver and CSCC president, has driven the prototype and his comments suggest what may lie ahead for RAI. "I drove the *Scarab* at Riverside, taching well over 160 mph down the main straight. It's one of the few cars I've driven that genuinely feels good at speeds over 140. We got very good times, close to record times, although the car wasn't handling at its optimum that day. The front wheels were sliding earlier than the rear ones but I hear that that was corrected immediately just by going to a smaller diameter sway bar at the front.

"This car has more potential than anything I have seen in years. We've all seen lots of specials in which an awful lot of time and money have been poured and they just wind up dogs. But this one is starting out high up on the performance scale. I can't see it taking much to make this a really exceptional machine."

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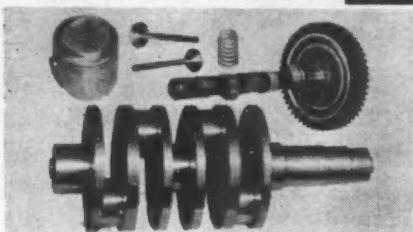
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ABINGDON

(Continued from page 50)



Successor model to the C was the J4 competition car. The J family, which included the usual eight-fifty sisters with more displacement and less performance, originated the exposed slab tank and sawed-off body shape that was to characterize every Midget built (with the exception of the Q and R racers) right down the line until the MG-A's advent in 1955. Sharing many features with its forebears, the J4 had an iron 4-cylinder engine with a bore and stroke of 57 by 73 mm (746 cc), a single overhead camshaft driven at the front end through the vertically mounted generator, valves slightly inclined the "wrong way" (stem tips inclined *inwards*), and a fully counterbalanced two-bearing crank that was machined from the solid. The front main bearing ran on balls and the intake and exhaust ports, like those of the later C-types, were located on opposite sides of the head. Blown, the J4 gave 72.3 bhp at 6000 per minute, a respectable turnover for a crank without center support. The J4's unblown counterparts, designated J1 and J2, initiated the Abingdon fashion for dual SU carbs, which of course persists to this day. The C/D cousins having outgrown their small and flaccid brakes, bigger stoppers were borrowed for the J4 off the contemporary 6-cylinder Magna.

In spite of the formidable stressing to which the J4 engine was subjected, it proved remarkably reliable. It was this one, as mentioned earlier, that finished sixth at Le Mans in 1933. Too, in the Mannin Beg race at Douglas, Isle of Man, the same year, an absolute mechanical massacre, two out of the only three cars that finished were J4s, and these included the winner.

Though quite an *objet d'art* in its way, the two-bearing crank was the limiting factor in the Midget engines of the early 30s, so the next move was obviously to build in a midships bearing. This feature duly appeared on the Q-type, a production racing car that succeeded the J4 two-seater in 1934. The resulting extra stiffness at the bottom end made radical increases in boost pressure possible, and the Q engine, blown by Zoller, responded with the astonishing output of 113 horsepower at 7200 per minute. In spite of its conventional chassis and hard semi elliptic springs, features that had been common to all Midgets up to this date, the Q was a taut and roadable baby, partly perhaps by virtue of its good weight distribution and increased tread and wheelbase dimensions. These were 45 and 94 inches respectively, compared with the J4's 42 and 86 inches. Among its other competition achievements, the Q, driven by Hugh

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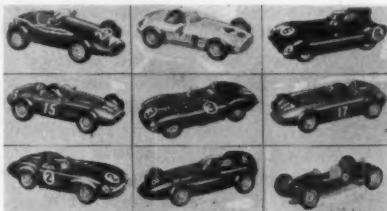
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Hamilton's business partner, Bill Everitt, set a Class H lap record for the Brooklands Mountain circuit that was faster than Dick Seaman's contemporary Class G (1100 cc) mark with a K3 Magnette. Everitt's Q also set international 750 records for the standing kilometer and mile — 69.75 and 79.88 mph — that overtopped the corresponding G-class figures of the day.

Every Abingdon design had to have its quaintness and the Q was no exception. Fitted as it was with a preselector gearbox, it would not, in the normal order of things, possess a clutch. Nonetheless it did have one, its peculiarity being that no means of operating it was provided. "An elegant safety device", as John Thornley calls it in *Maintaining the Breed*: it was there for the sole purpose of allowing a degree of slip on full power and thereby cushioning the heavily stressed transmission.

Last of the mighty Midgets was the remarkable R-type, launched only a few months before the ax fell on MG racing interests in 1935. Designed by chief engineer H. N. Charles, who with the clever and hard headed Sydney Enever had played a leading part in the development of its predecessors, the R chassis was every inch an *hors d'usage* concept. All wheels were independently suspended by means of double wishbones and low rate torsion bars, the frame itself being a fabricated backbone, crotched at the front to enclose the engine between its thighs. In the nature of its suspension geometry, the car heeled like crazy on turns, the wheels adopting an alarming looking out-at-the-top attitude. Nevertheless, once you got over being frightened by these gymnastics the cornering power proved at least equal to the Q's. At speed in a straight line, moreover, the ride was phenomenally flat and the comfort comparable with state limousines. I remember asking Hubert Charles, a big, round Jello of a man with a boy's zest for life and laughs, what put him onto the idea of using torsion bars, which of course were a relatively undeveloped springing medium twenty-two years ago. "This", he said, pulling an ordinary cigarette case out of his pocket and flicking it open. Somehow it'd never occurred to me that the spring in a cigarette case was a torsion bar.

The 746 cc engine used in the R-type Midget was in all major respects a direct hand-down from the Q, and developed the same power at the same revs. The Q in turn had derived its engine from the P series brethren — PA in the long established eight-fifty size and PB at 939 cc. These P-wagens never were competition cars, so strictly they have no place in our scholarly rundown. We are, to be honest, just dragging them in by the dumbirons to give one last glimpse of the empirical drolleries that were practiced in the infancy of the Octagon. The PA, after a short spell in production, was judged to be short on power for its weight and size. By siamesing the outer pairs of cylinders, Enever could get some but not all of the extra volume he was looking for. Stroking, for technical reasons, was out of the question. So-o-o-o . . . damned if he didn't make his cylinders and pistons *oval*. Don't laugh — it worked.

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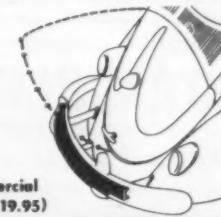
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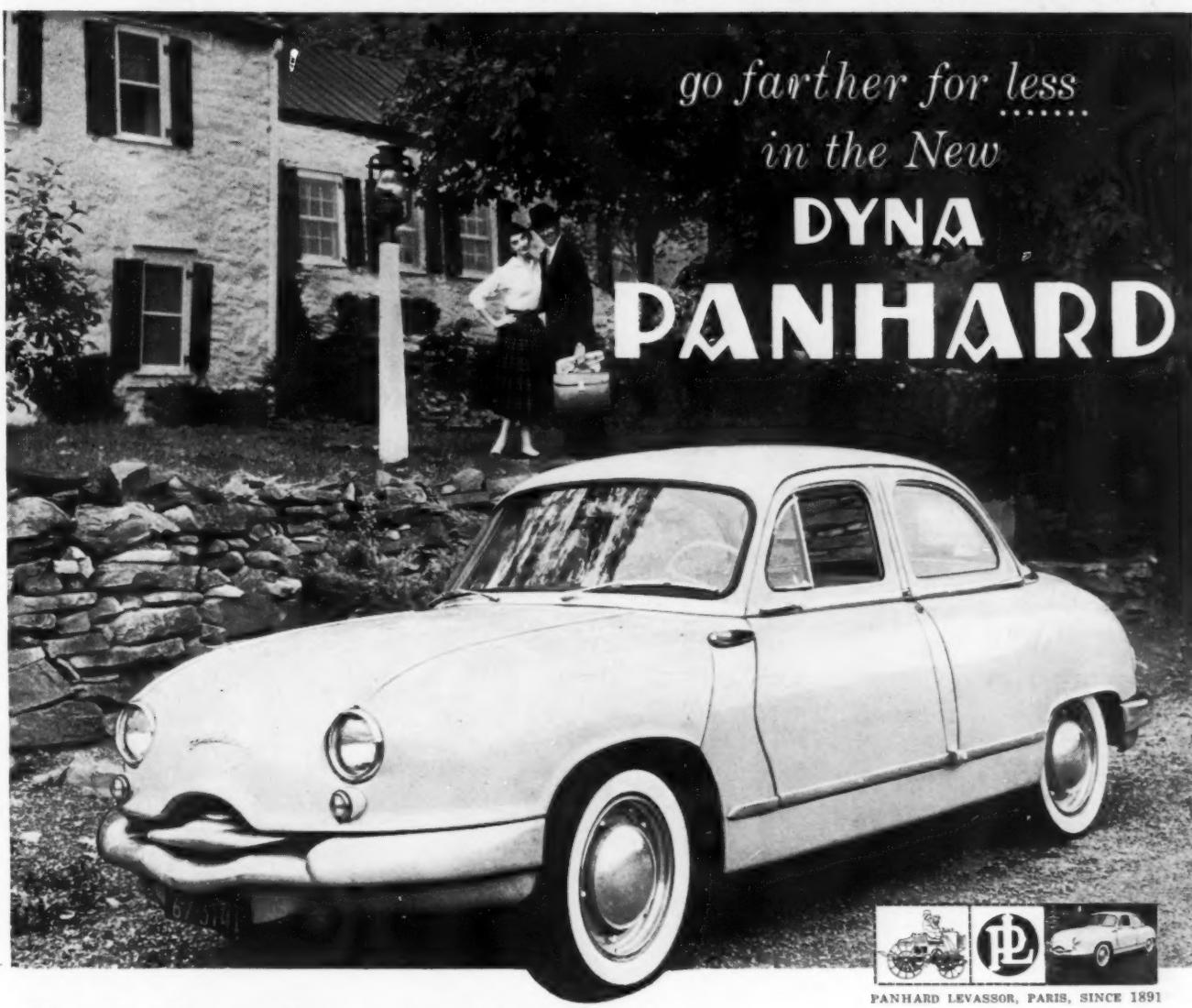
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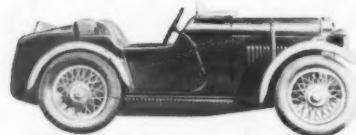
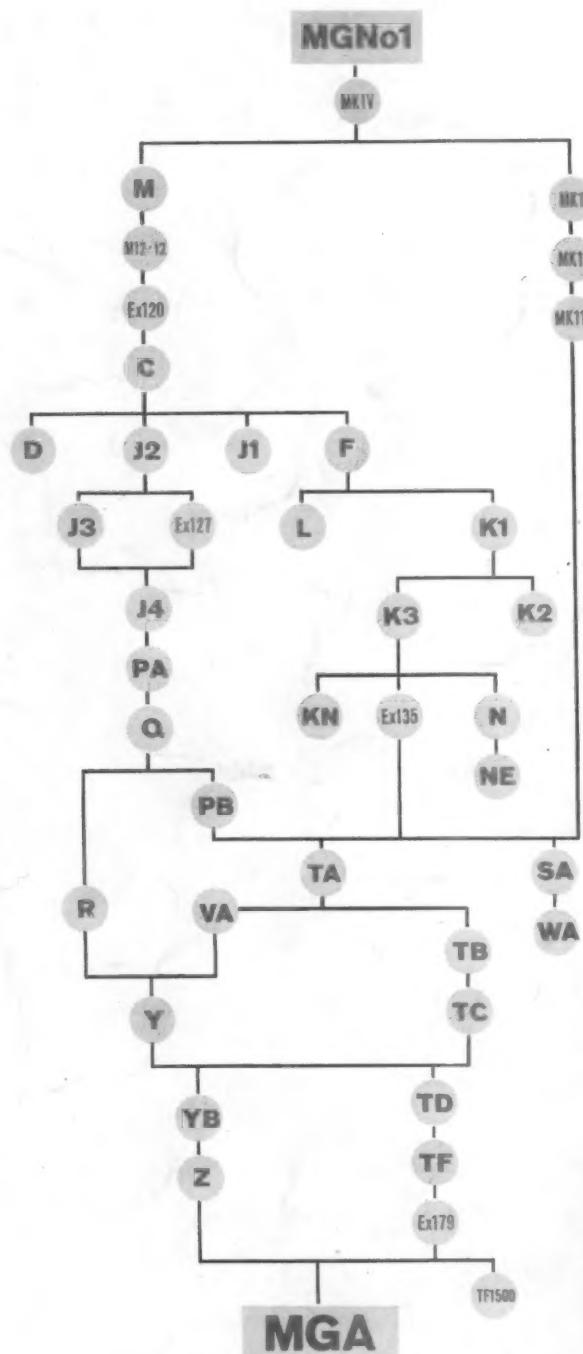
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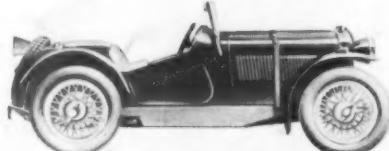
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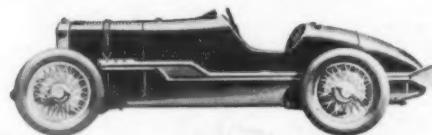
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